

Disability NOW

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Bank backtrack

A high street bank has caved in to pressure from local community and disability groups and agreed to re-staff an automated branch in Reading.

As part of a pilot project in the Reading area, Lloyds TSB replaced staff with automatic teller machines in the Theale branch in March. It claimed fewer customers meant the branch was no longer viable.

Protestors, including the Campaign for Community Banking Services (CCBS), argued that many disabled people would not be able to use the machines or travel to another branch. The bank has now agreed to reintroduce staff at Theale and other Reading branches.

Kirsty Clay, a spokeswoman for Lloyds TSB, said: "We are concerned about customers with disabilities and we are going to put cashiers back in three branches."

Brian Lamb, head of public affairs at CCBS member Scope, said: "Disabled people's independence was being threatened

here. Some people may require assistance from staff to help sign cheques and some may not be able to use cash machines due to visual impairment."

The case raises wider concerns about the impact of the increasing trend towards new systems such as telephone and internet banking. A 1998/99 survey by market research group NOP showed that only 13 per cent of people over 16 have access to the internet at home via a personal computer. Estimates for disabled people are even lower, according to Andy Clarke, a consultant at AbilityNet, a charity which trains disabled people to use computer technology.

"Before you can do internet banking you need a computer, and many disabled people can't afford it," Mr Clarke told DN. "If you remove traditional banking methods you are potentially disadvantaging disabled people. If you take away one thing, you have to replace it with something better."



Sign of the times: young and old joined a London march calling for British Sign Language to be given official recognition. The protest was organised by the Federation of Deaf People in June. MARION BULL

Killing concerns

Charities are once again demanding better care for mentally ill people after a paranoid schizophrenic man was jailed for stabbing a social worker to death.

An Old Bailey court found Anthony Joseph, 27, guilty of manslaughter on 13 July and sent him to prison indefinitely. Mr Joseph, who believed he was the son of God, stabbed Jenny Morrison, 51, more than 100 times in a frenzied attack last November.

It emerged that Mr Joseph's condition had not been considered serious enough for a risk assessment, even though he had held a knife to his mother's throat. Staff at the London hostel where he was living at the time of the stabbing were aware he had not been taking his medicine but were unable to

act. Under present legislation enforced medication is illegal.

Cliff Prior, chief executive of the National Schizophrenia Fellowship (NSF), said: "Proper risk assessments, medication monitoring and communication between different health and social services agencies are needed to support mental health workers and to give people the best chance to overcome the terror induced by illness."

The Government is considering whether to force patients in the community to take their medication, as part of a review of the 1983 Mental Health Act. An expert committee was due

to report to ministers on the matter as DN went to press.

Margaret Pedler, head of policy development at the charity Mind, said: "We need vast improvements to risk assessment procedures but not compulsory medical treatment that will not work."

The NSF has launched a petition* which calls for everyone with a severe mental health problem to have the right to prompt and up-to-date health care. The Better Act Now! petition will be handed in to the Government on World Mental Health Day in October.

*Tel: 0171-330 9108.

Election access

The Government is considering electoral reforms to make voting easier for disabled people. Proposals include supermarket voting, large-print ballot slips, mobile polling booths and better access to existing polling stations.

The ideas come from the Working Party on Electoral

Procedures led by Home Office Minister George Howarth. Findings were shown to Home Secretary Jack Straw in July.

Mr Howarth said: "Work is well under way to improve facilities for disabled voters."

The new schemes may be ready for Londoners' mayoral vote next May.

Stop press

Testing of employees for genetic diseases should be permitted on a limited scale, Government advisors have said.

The Human Genetics Advisory Commission said employers should be allowed to test if a condition could put people at risk in the workplace but tests would not be obligatory.

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New 'death ethic'

New doctors' guidelines mean that disabled people could be starved or dehydrated to death.

The British Medical Association guidelines published in June give doctors the power to withdraw or withhold food, water or treatment from patients who are terminally ill or in a persistent vegetative

state. *Withdrawing or Withholding Life-Prolonging Treatment** advises doctors not to prolong life at all costs and to consider patients' quality of life after treatment.

Richard Wood, chief executive of the British Council of Disabled People, said: "Doctors have no right to make that kind

of decision over people's lives."

• Farmer William Grant is appealing to the Scottish Court of Session to let his wife die. Lynn Grant, 34, was brain damaged during labour three years ago and is in an Inverness hospital.

*£9.95, tel: 0171-383 6244.

Benefit changes delayed

Controversial changes to incapacity benefit and disability living allowance (DLA) are now unlikely to become law until next autumn.

The Welfare Reform and Pensions Bill, which includes unpopular changes to incapacity benefit and DLA, is not likely to have got through parliament before the summer recess at the end of July.

Kate Adams of protest group Incapacity Action welcomed the delay to the Bill.

"It gives us more time to organise ourselves. We're hoping to get many more groups down to parliament to protest when the Bill comes back in the autumn," she said.

The proposed benefit changes sparked a massive backbench rebellion in May.

Access guide

The Government has published a guide to providing access. *The Code of Practice to the 1995 Disability Discrimination Act** is aimed at providers of goods and services. It covers existing obligations and additional duties from October.

*Free on www.disability.gov.uk

New appointment

Minister for Disabled People Margaret Hodge has appointed Sue Maynard Campbell, director of Equal Ability, as chair of the Advisory Committee for Disabled People in Employment and Training.

DisabilityNOW

<http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk>

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DN8/99



Yeehah! Tassles and cuban heels came to Manchester with the American-themed Independence Festival in July. Run by disability groups and the council, the festival celebrated the lives of disabled people.

Bus access trauma

A 55-year-old Southport man almost missed a day trip to Wales when he was not allowed on to his local bus.

Wheelchair user Bill Johnson was forbidden to board the "kneeling" Southport and District bus in June, even though it was not crowded and the wheelchair was foldable.

A spokesperson from MTL North, which owns Southport and District Buses, said the driver thought the bus was full

and was following safety rules.

All new buses will have to be accessible to wheelchairs when another section of the Disability Discrimination Act is implemented in October.

- Low-floor buses increase passengers, says a survey published by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions in July. The study of buses in Cornwall showed a 15 per cent rise in passenger numbers in the first year.

'Sin' scientist explains all

A top reproduction scientist has tried to explain himself after reports that he said it would be a "sin" for parents to give birth to children with genetic defects in the future.

Professor Bob Edwards, who helped produce Britain's first test-tube baby, was explaining remarks made in July.

While he admitted he might have used the word "sin", he said he didn't mean it in a religious sense or that society would pressure parents to avoid having such children.

He said he meant that, in future, people with suspected genetic problems could use test-tube technology to have babies, and have the embryo screened before implantation.

"People could avoid abortions and go to the very early stages of development," he said.

But Anne Rae of the British Council of Disabled People's international genetics group, said: "All this feeds into a view that disabled people are too expensive and not welcome."

Rehabilitation, said: "We're extremely concerned about the impact on disabled people's ability to take cases to court."

A spokesman for the Lord Chancellor's Office said: "This is not a cut but a reallocation of resources. Personal injury cases lend themselves to a 'no win, no fee' system."

The Bill was due to complete its passage through parliament as DN went to press.

Bill will cut legal aid

Legal aid for many personal injury claims will not be available under the new Access to Justice Bill.

A Legal Services Commission will replace the Legal Aid Board, and aid will only be given in cases of public interest or where there are high investigative costs.

Samantha Fothergill, legal advisor at the Royal Association for Disability and

Pot luck



A man with rheumatism walked free from court in July after the judge ruled that cannabis found in his

possession was to reduce pain.

Albert James admitted possessing the drug after police raided his home in London last year. Judge Simon Goldstein gave Mr James a three-year conditional discharge.

Clare Hodges, director of the pressure group Alliance for Cannabis Therapeutics, welcomed the decision but said: "It is no solace for people who do not get discharged."

Meanwhile, the Scottish Public Health Committee of

the British Medical Association (BMA) has narrowly failed to change BMA policy to support legalising raw cannabis for medicinal purposes.

The BMA already supports legalisation of chemicals derived from cannabis, but in July the motion on raw cannabis was beaten by 125 votes to 116.

Chair of the committee George Venters said: "People are being denied something that will give them symptomatic relief. I think ultimately people will realise the inadequacies of the law."

Ms Hodges said: "This shows widespread recognition that thousands of disabled people are using cannabis now to very good effect."

Civil service jobs push

The Government has plans to get more disabled people into the civil service after a report found huge under-representation of minority groups.

The Schneider-Ross report, commissioned by the Government and published in July, looked at the experiences of disabled people, ethnic minorities and women in the civil service, and made recommendations to improve representation of these groups.

Cabinet Office statistics show that the civil service

employed 19,254 disabled people (4 per cent of the total staff) in 1998. Of these only 55 were senior-ranking.

Dr Jack Cunningham, Minister for the Cabinet Office, responded to the findings by announcing a set of measures including open days, mentoring schemes and bursaries.

He said: "We need to redouble our efforts. The report describes a situation that is unacceptable to the Government. We need to do much better."

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Surfing IT

Websites of companies and organisations will soon have to be accessible to people with visual impairments.

Under the Disability Discrimination Act to be implemented in October, organisations must offer internet information in an accessible form if it is "reasonable" to do so. At present 90 per cent of websites cannot be read by the UK's 1.7 million people with a serious sight impairment, says the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB).

A video* showing how websites can be made accessible was launched in July by the RNIB and the international project group, the Web Accessibility Initiative.

"People misuse the internet programming language HTML

(HyperText Markup Language) to create visual effects," said Julie Howell, campaigns officer for the RNIB's Access to Digital Information.

The video *Websites at Work*, aimed at anyone who designs or has their own website, shows how the bending of programming rules has made many websites impossible for speech synthesiser and Braille access technology to read.

"By making an internet service inaccessible you potentially lose 8.5 million disabled customers," Julie Howell said.

Internet user Mark Prouse, who is registered blind, welcomed the video: "Hopefully, it will make people realise that websites don't have to be unappealing to be accessible."

*Free, tel: 0171-391 2191.

Elderly care needs planning

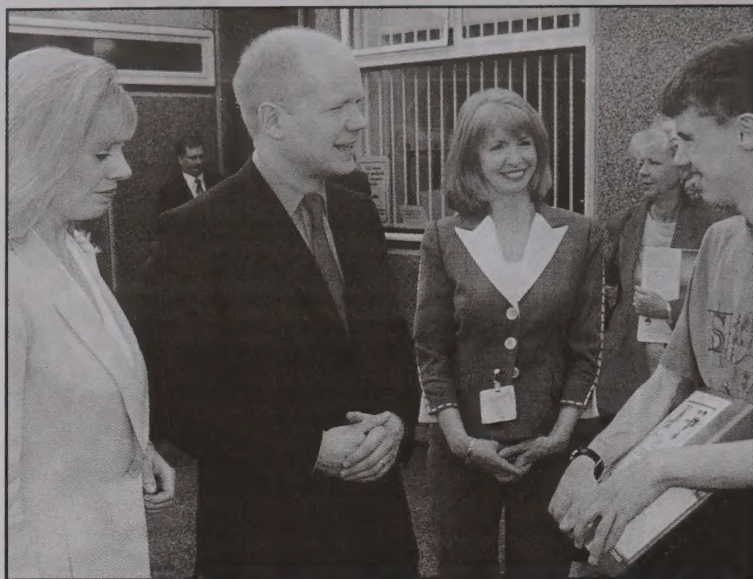
Local authorities need to take more interest in planning the care of elderly people in homes, a report has said.

*Who Cares Plans**, from the charity Counsel and Care, stresses the need to assess the risk of various activities, including recreation, for the

500,000 people who live in homes. A lack of planning can lead to boring lifestyles, excessive caution and sometimes locked doors, says the charity.

Decisions about risks should be taken by residents as far as possible, the report says.

*£7.50, tel: 0171-485 1550.



Schooldays: Robert Ogden School for autistic children, in Thurnscoe near Rotherham, was visited by William Hague, his wife Ffyon and Jane Asher in July, when they met pupil Jonathan Evans (right). The school is appealing for money from local businesses.

Motability misses out

Around 150,000 motorists whose vehicles are supplied through the Motability scheme will miss out on a windfall from the planned sale of the Automobile Association (AA).

The gas and electricity company Centrica has offered to buy the AA in a £1.1 billion deal, which, if accepted by AA members in an autumn vote, would give them £240 each.

But people who got their AA membership through Motability will not be eligible.

People must have paid for their membership themselves in order to receive the money.

Motability director Noel Muddiman said a decreasing number of customers will be affected as the contract moved to the RAC in 1997.

"Motability customers with AA breakdown cover have already benefited from the keen prices afforded to the scheme by the AA," he said.

To see whether you are eligible, tel: 0800-917 7200.

Payment concerns

An £8,000 benefit award made to a pensioner after a 24-year wait may now disqualify him from help with his council tax.

Former mechanic Ron Ambrose, of Northampton, was paid industrial injuries benefit in June for a back injury claim made in 1975. Mr Ambrose's application to the Benefits Agency was only resolved when Labour MP Sally Keeble stepped in.

But council tax officials are now checking whether Mr Ambrose's council tax help will be affected by the lump sum.

A spokesperson for Northampton Borough Council said: "Generally speaking, lump sums are taken into consideration. However, there is a grey area when it comes to backdated benefit payments."

Meanwhile, Ms Keeble thinks Mr Ambrose has not been paid enough and should get compensation. The Benefits Agency is considering this.

Ms Keeble said: "He should have had the money when his family was growing up. I think it is dreadful."

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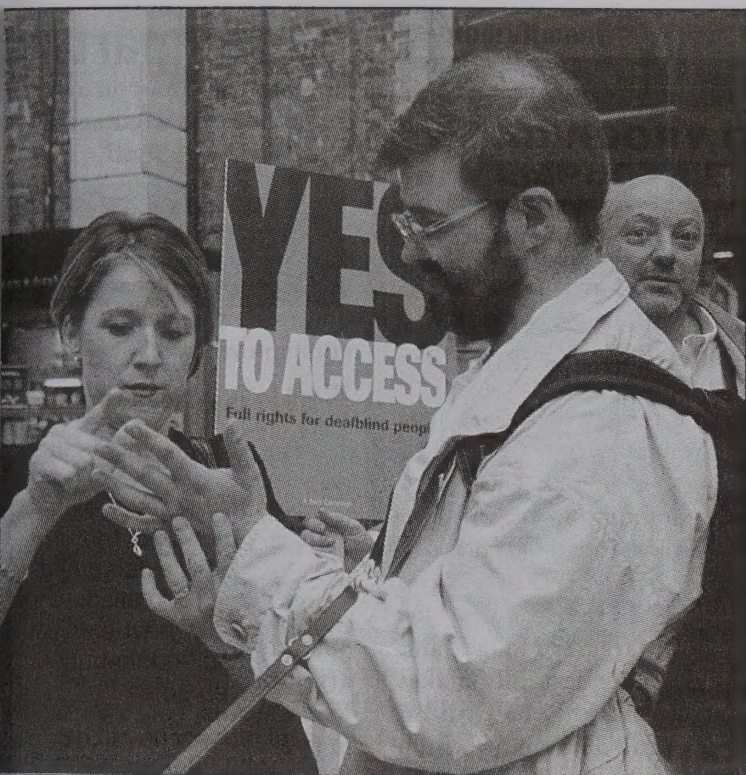
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Hands-on approach: One hundred deafblind people called for the right to one-to-one communication support at a protest organised by Sense and Deafblind UK in London in June. MARION BULL

Films fail stuntman

Rules set by actors' union Equity mean that a disabled stuntman is paid less than his non-disabled colleagues.

Louie Brownsell was trained by Steven Spielberg to perform stunts in *Saving Private Ryan* but cannot join Equity's Stunt Register because of his disability. To join the Register applicants must pass tests in activities including fencing and judo, and these tests are not adapted to let disabled people gain equivalent qualifications.

Film studios such as Steven

Spielberg's Dreamworks argue that Louie, who lost a leg in a motorbike accident, cannot be paid the full rate because he is not registered. In *The Mummy*, Louie was paid £150 a day – the rate paid to extras – plus amounts for individual "gags" like having his leg blown off. Registered stunt performers could earn up to £3,000 a day.

"I've trained to do these stunts, so why won't they give me the correct rate of pay?" asks Louie, who claims he was dropped from Ridley Scott's

new epic *Gladiators* after demanding the stunt rate.

Peter Dunne, head of publicity at Dreamworks, said: "We are sympathetic, but as things stand he's not a stuntman."

Equity spokesperson Martin Brown said it was not the union's aim to exclude people: "We take the issue of access to acting work seriously. But we also take safety of performers seriously. Of course we will look at these matters, but we can't put actors lives at risk." See Profile, page 10.

A word in your ear

Ewan McGregor's latest film *Rogue Trader* was used to launch a new aid for visually impaired cinema goers in June.

Cinetracker, produced by Ewan's mother Carol, was launched at the Odeon, Leicester Square. This is the first cinema to fit the system, which automatically synchronises a film's soundtrack with recorded spoken descriptions.

"People should put pressure on their cinemas to install the Cinetracker system," Carol McGregor told DN.

For details of Cinetracker, tel: (01506) 852000.

People carrier safety scare

People carriers offer little protection in crashes, according to a report* published at the end of June.

The study was undertaken by the Euro New Car Assessment Programme (Euro NCAP), of which the AA is a member. It tested the Renault Espace, Toyota Picnic, Peugeot 806, Nissan Serena, VW Sharan, Mitsubishi. "New" Space Wagon, Vauxhall Sintra and Chrysler Voyager. The Espace caused least damage to occupants, while the Voyager was the most unsafe.

People carriers are often popular with disabled people

because of the vehicles' size.

Andrew Boyle from Renault said his company was happy it had come first but that data from the laboratory does not always reflect "the real world".

"Renault and other car companies would dispute the side and front impact results," he said. "Renault has moved deliberately to focus on safety and security in its cars."

Brian Rees, public relations manager at Chrysler, said: "The Chrysler Voyager is a very safe car to be in if you are in an accident."

*Available to AA members, tel: 0800- 262 050.

Model attitudes

The Co-operative Bank is to use disabled people in TV adverts starting in August.

The ads are part of the bank's commitment to the VisAble campaign run by the charity Leonard Cheshire. VisAble aims to get companies to use disabled models.

The bank is planning to continue using disabled models after the campaign ends in May.

What a turkey

Bernard Matthews Foods has paid £230,000 in damages to a cleaner who developed a form of repetitive strain injury (RSI) working in its Suffolk factory.

Kim Godfrey developed the injury after working as a cage tray cleaner. The damages were awarded on the grounds that he would never work again.

The turkey producer is considering an appeal.

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MMR - no link found

Two independent studies have found no links between autism or Crohn's disease and the vaccination for measles, mumps and rubella (MMR).

The studies by the Committee on Safety of Medicines and the Public Health Laboratory Service were commissioned by the Department of Health and published in June. They looked at 590 children with autism or the bowel condition Crohn's disease.

The Government hopes the findings will boost MMR take-up. The percentage of children receiving the MMR vaccine has dropped from 90 per cent in 1994 to 75 per cent today.

But not everyone is completely happy with the results of the research.

"Plenty of neutral scientists say the studies are flawed," said Jackie Fletcher, spokesperson for Jabs, the charity that campaigns for better compensation for children damaged by vaccination. "It is a shame because what we are looking for is honest research and not the Department of Health trying to cover up. We need to look honestly at these children. We can't keep brushing them under the carpet all the time."

Department of Health, tel: 0171-210 3000.



Take note: visually-impaired people will benefit from the new £20 note. Launched in June, the note has a large figure 20 and an anti-counterfeit hologram. By chance, the hologram has a raised edge which could help recognition.

BANK OF ENGLAND

Cloning ban

Advances made by US researchers in the cloning of human embryos have led the UK Government to set up an independent expert advisory group to investigate the whole cloning issue.

Minister of Public Health Tessa Jowell announced the setting up of the advisory group

at the end of June. She also extended the UK's present ban on human cloning. The advisory group should be ready to report on its findings early next year.

The techniques that are being developed could be used to create cloned tissue or replacement organs.

See Comment, page 11.

Bullying report

Bullying is a regular feature of the lives of most people with learning difficulties, according to a study from Mencap.

Almost 90 per cent of people with learning disabilities have been bullied and 73 per cent in public places, according to *Living in Fear**, published in June.

The report calls for more awareness programmes to promote greater knowledge and understanding in schools, the social services and the police.

Speaking at the report's launch, Minister for Disabled People Margaret Hodge said: "This report certainly makes for grim reading, but it is an important document which must inform the Government's policies."

*Tel: 0171-454 0454.

See also Parent's Voice in DN next month.

Minimum wage

The Association for Supported Employment is producing a report on the employment effects of the minimum wage introduced last April.

In the past people on placement schemes supported by organisations such as Remploy at workplaces like the supermarket chain Tesco sometimes received less than the minimum of £3.60 per hour.

The report aims to discover if higher wage rates have meant that fewer people are employed by companies that used to pay below the minimum wage.

Call (01768) 881225 for a questionnaire.

Protest party

Brent Access Group marked 25 years of no disabled access to Brent Town Hall, north London, with a party in July. A quarter of a century after the director of social services had to carry a wheelchair user up the stairs, the council has still not improved access.

Fatherly love

A father was spared prison and given a two-year probation sentence after trying to kill himself and his 20-year-old autistic son because of pressure at home and at work. Stephen James, 48, was found not guilty of attempted murder at Manchester crown court in June.

The dental technician from Rochdale was rescued by two passers-by who pulled him and his son from a car filled with exhaust fumes.

One of the lads

A new men's magazine, called *SP*, was launched by the RNIB in May.

Aimed at young men with visual impairments, *SP* features articles from *Loaded*, *FHM* and other "lad's mags". It is available in Braille and on disk. Tel: 0345-023 153.

• A new, free recruitment bulletin aimed at disabled people is to be launched this autumn by journalists Nick Lewis and Michael Turner. Pilot copies of *Ready, Willing, Able*, which will also be published on the internet, are already available. Tel: 0181-696 7006.

BALANTIC CONFERENCE

Transnational Partnership in Europe

17 & 18 November 1999, Langstone Cliff Hotel

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Devon County Council is hosting a two-day European Conference to explore issues of access to employment for people with learning disabilities. It is an opportunity to meet and discuss these issues with UK and European colleagues.

Over the past two years, social care organisations from France, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK have been involved in the European funded transnational project called Balantic.

The project has concentrated on:

- evaluating differences in social benefit systems and the minimum wage
- evaluating differences in social policy and support systems
- evaluating access to employment, job coach and work placement systems
- sharing 'best practice'
- developing a number of protocols for partnership working
- promoting Agenda 21
- promoting self-advocacy and user rights

The keynote speaker will be the Rt. Hon. John Hutton, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department of Health.

Other speakers will include the UK Horizon Support Unit and the Department for Education and Employment.

Delegates will have the opportunity to attend three of the five workshops over the two days.

The workshops will cover:

- access to employment and training for people with learning disabilities
- benefit systems, minimum wage, and the law
- self-advocacy and user rights
- assessment and evaluation systems
- Agenda 21

Delegate fee:

£150 includes lunches, tea and coffee, Gala Dinner on the first night, Conference Pack and Conference Report and Evaluation Report. Accommodation and travel are NOT included.

Further details and a booking form may be obtained from:

Mrs Rosie Kingman, Devon County Council Social Services Directorate, Room A205, Annexe Building, County Hall, Exeter EX2 4QR.

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Having a ball: Cerebral palsy charity Scope has £2m of awards to give away to disabled people who want to make their mark in the community. At the launch of the Give it a Go Millennium Awards were (left to right) BBC1 *Watchdog* *Healthcheck*'s Wesley Kerr, Scope campaigns networker Colin Hicks and LWT *Don't Do This* *At Home* presenter Paul Hendy. For a form, tel: 0800-626216.

Miner assessments

Assessments began in July on 40,000 former British Coal employees to set compensation levels for injuries caused by vibrating tools.

Regional centres will assess the miners for a condition known as Vibration White Finger, caused by reduced blood flow when using machinery continually. The 12 centres, run by SEMA Group UK, will assess injured miners for compensation under a package agreed by the Government last January.

Announcing the contract for the assessments in June, Energy Minister John Battle said: "All 40,000 claimants will receive an independent, objective, fair and accurate assessment which can form the agreed basis for settling their claims. We have developed the first fully accurate method of assessing the nature of these injuries and the level of resulting disability in order to ensure fairness to each of these injured men."

All claimants should have been assessed within two years.

Train trouble

Anne Begg, MP for Aberdeen South, was forced to spend a 60-minute journey from Gatwick to central London in the guard's van of a Connex South Central train.

Ms Begg, a wheelchair user, was returning from a fact-finding trip investigating access for disabled foreign visitors. Unable to enter the passenger area of the 30-year-old "slam door" train, the 43-year-old MP had to spend the entire journey in the windowless "brake van".

Under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) new

trains must be fully accessible, but there is no requirement for existing inaccessible stock to be phased out.

"I didn't know companies still had such old carriages," Ms Begg told DN. "Disabled people shouldn't be treated like pieces of luggage. It's just not good enough."

Connex South Central, which runs trains in south London and on the south coast, has now announced a £100m programme of new rolling stock. David Ewart, media relations manager at Connex, said: "Our managing director has

apologised to Ms Begg. If our bid for the renewal of our franchise is successful we hope to replace all slam door coaches by 2003."

• The first new trains to comply fully with the DDA go into service on Anglia Railways this summer.

The eight new trains will run between London and Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft and Bury St Edmunds. Features include dedicated wheelchair spaces, alarms at accessible levels, disabled toilets, door controls marked with Braille and visual displays announcing stops.

It's getting easier to talk

Disabled people are to benefit from a new BT payphone.

Features of the Contour 400 include a large keypad and loudspeaker. Function buttons are colour coded, and a prepayment facility will help people who struggle to handle change.

Bob Twitchin, a member of the DIEL committee which advises Ofcom on disabled and elderly phone users, said: "It looks as though what they have come up with will meet a lot of people's requirements."

BT sales enquiries, tel: 150.

Sheep dip links

Nerve damage, depression and anxiety in farmers are linked to exposure to sheep dip chemicals in a report commissioned by the Government.

The study, carried out by the Institute of Occupational Medicine (IOM), looked into the health of farmers using organophosphate (OP) dips. Of 600 farmers studied, 19 per cent reported symptoms and further tests showed medical evidence of conditions. The main source of exposure was found to be through handling dip concentrates. The Government is currently reviewing the use of OPs.

Peter Beaumont, development director of the Pesticide

Trust which calls for a ban on OP dips, said that farmers should be compensated.

"Resources should now be directed to diagnose and treat the victims," he added.

Farmers have also alleged the chemicals have caused poor concentration and memory loss. A number are set to take court action.

A spokeswoman for the National Office of Animal Health, which represents firms selling animal health products, said protective clothing was important when using OP dips.

"The evidence has been that if they are used properly they do not cause a problem," she added.

Disabled? You should be shot!

Shannon is a model and she gets shot regularly.

At Leonard Cheshire, Britain's leading disability care charity, we think that this is a good thing – disabled people are almost never seen in adverts or commercials, yet represent 10% of the population.

We want to do something about this and so we have launched the VisABLE competition – a modelling competition with a difference – it's only open to disabled people.

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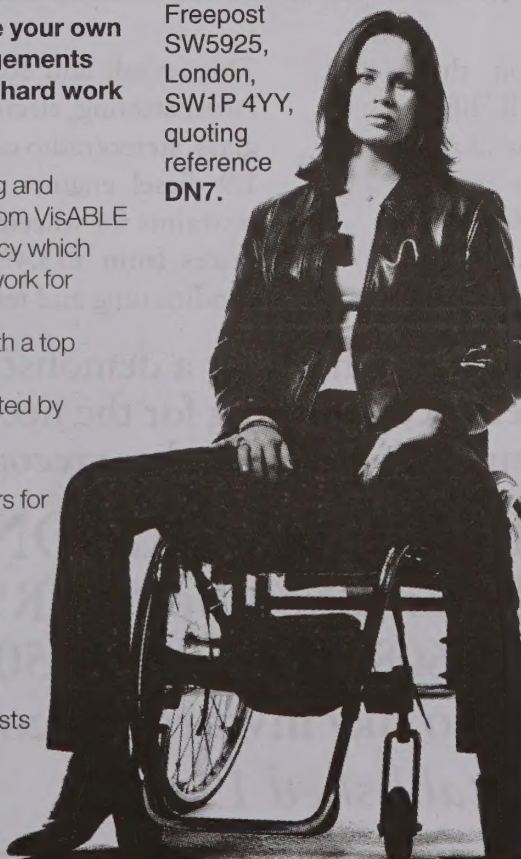
Closing date
31 October 1999.

One male and one female winner will be chosen from 16 finalists by an independent panel of judges.

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VisABLE

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Pen relief

A pen which stops pain is bringing relief to many disabled people, suppliers claim.

The pen, known as Pain Gone, claims to ease the symptoms of back pain, headaches, arthritis and aching muscles. It gives out electric impulses which stimulate the body to produce natural painkillers, according to suppliers UK Care Products in Sheffield. People with electronic health aids such as pacemakers should not use the pen, however.

"We've had testimonials from people who have had pain for years, or not been able to sleep or walk upstairs without a stairlift," said company

managing director Stuart Smith. "We've had a lady who could walk out of her wheelchair for the first time in ages."

Gladys Robinson, 73, of Scarborough, who has arthritis, said: "It has helped me. I don't have to take as many painkillers now."

The pen looks set to have clinical trials at Pontefract and Pinderfields Hospital.

Angela Stark, the hospital's pain service manager, said some patients had already been impressed by the pen but that it was too early to make a comment on its effectiveness.

£49.95, tel: 0114-231 5050.



Power of the pen: Gladys Robinson says the Pain Gone pen helps

SCARBOROUGH EVENING NEWS

In brief

Stem cell transplants

Cancer patients and people with genetic disabilities may benefit from a new technique for growing blood stem cells outside the body. Scientists at the University of Washington in Seattle have managed to grow the vital cells that are damaged during radiotherapy and chemotherapy, and transplant them successfully into mice.

Chance of arthritis help

A supplement based on ginger may help arthritis, according to Danish researchers. The supplement, Zinaxin, was launched in the UK in May. The Arthritis Research Campaign and the Arthritis Foundation in the US, however, have pointed out that there is as yet no scientific evidence to back claims for the supplement's efficacy.

Alzheimer's hope

Scientists have vaccinated mice against proteins associated with Alzheimer's. Claims that the findings of Dale Schenk and colleagues from Elan Pharmaceuticals in San Francisco could herald a vaccine for Alzheimer's should be treated with caution, according to science journal *Nature*.

Walking again

A man who lost both legs at the hip after an explosion is walking again after being fitted with a new type of artificial leg.

The man, who comes from North Africa, had been told by French doctors that he would never walk again.

The design of the new leg, made by bioengineers at the University of Strathclyde, is

based on the leg braces used by people with paraplegia.

Bill Spence, one of the engineers involved in the work, described it as "incredible".

"We fitted the prosthesis to our patient, he stood up and then he walked away down the room using only a pair of crutches to help him balance," he said.

Making waves work

Brainwaves could help disabled people to move artificial limbs, US researchers have said.

Scientists from the MCP Hahnemann Medical College Philadelphia have wired up a rat's brain to allow it to operate a robot arm. The team, led by Dr John K Chapin, used brain impulses recorded from a rat that was trained to press a lever and was then rewarded with

water delivered by a robot arm.

Dr Chapin told *DN*: "The guiding idea has been that one day paralysed people might be able to operate machines. Now that we have been able to allow a rat to control a robot arm it shows the feasibility. But it could take 10 or 20 years."

Eventually a disabled person could stimulate their own muscles or spinal cord.

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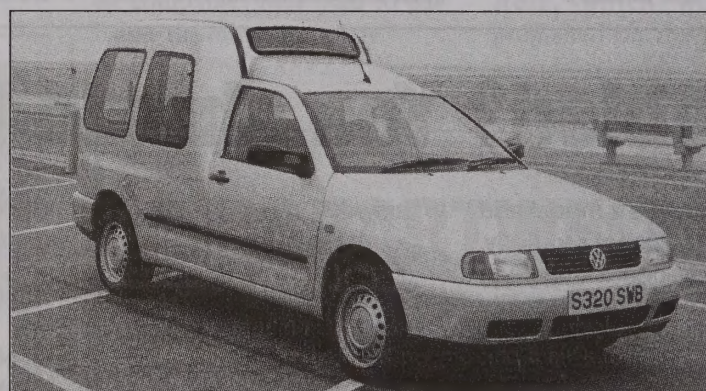


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Contact Paul Cassidy or David Reid for brochures or a demonstration. Invatravel is a long established company with years of experience providing for the needs of people with disabilities. Conversions are to Volkswagen compatible design and are recognised converters for VW.

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Winning work

It's a year since the New Deal's Innovative Schemes were announced. Rod Hermeston gives a progress report

Former builder Ian Bullions recently topped off his recovery from a near-fatal traffic accident by getting back into a job. Now Ian, from South Killworth in Leicestershire, is a housing manager for a building firm.

Ian is just one of the people who have benefited from the Innovative Schemes programme, part of the Government's £195m New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP). In July last year the Government announced the first ten winning bids for funding to run various Innovative

The schemes provide training and mentoring, and also encourage companies to give jobs to disabled people

Schemes across the country, all designed to improve the employment prospects of people on incapacity benefits and aimed at 800 people. The schemes provide training, therapy and mentoring, and also encourage companies to give jobs to disabled people.

One successful bid was from Libra Health in Burbage, Leicestershire. The organisation now runs the Back to Work scheme for the East and West Midlands and helped Ian Bullions to get a job.

The first ten Innovative Schemes have found jobs for 181 people, while a further 126 are on work placements. There

The first ten Innovative Schemes have found jobs for 181 people

are 14 more Innovative Schemes planned, serving an estimated 1,000 people.

Changes to the benefit system have also come into effect to boost job prospects further. Since October last year, people on incapacity benefits have been able to try work out for up to a year and return to their former benefit if the job does not work out.

Sue Maynard Campbell, chair of the Association of Disabled Professionals (ADP), welcomed the success of the Innovative Schemes but has reservations. She hopes they will help develop good practice.

"There has been a lot of reinventing of the wheel

Training in IT

When 30-year-old Martin Rose from Bristol injured his back at work, he soon realised his days working as a care assistant were over. Luckily, a word of advice from his GP and some help from one of the Innovative Schemes set Martin on the path to a new career as an administrative assistant for Bristol City Council.

After training in information technology, Martin took a course at the Positive Action Partnership Innovative Scheme run by the West of England Centre for Integrated Living (WECIL) in Bristol. He then got his current job at Bristol City Council – a position that had been sourced by WECIL's Positive Action Partnership and was only open to disabled candidates.

"The people at WECIL have been really excellent," he said. "Even now, if I have any problems, I can just get on the phone."

because people did not know what has been done before," she said.

The New Deal's Personal Advisor Services project is a few months older than the Innovative Schemes. Announced in March last year, it was aimed at helping 250,000 people to find work. Under the scheme, advisors contact disabled people, assess their needs and potential, and help them to get training, find jobs or stay in work. So far 222 people have found work with the help of an advisor. Nationwide implementation of the scheme is being considered.

David Rendel, social services spokesman for the Liberal Democrats, is not

impressed by the jobs record of the Personal Advisor Service.

"It is quite clear that the Personal Advisor scheme, while very welcome, is not working very well," he said.

Mr Rendel argued that the Government needs to put more effort and publicity into programmes such as Access to Work, which provides equipment for disabled people in the workplace.

A Government spokesperson told DN that findings from the Innovative Schemes programme will influence the development of national policies.

He said that many people being assisted by advisors were not yet ready for work and this was why numbers of people

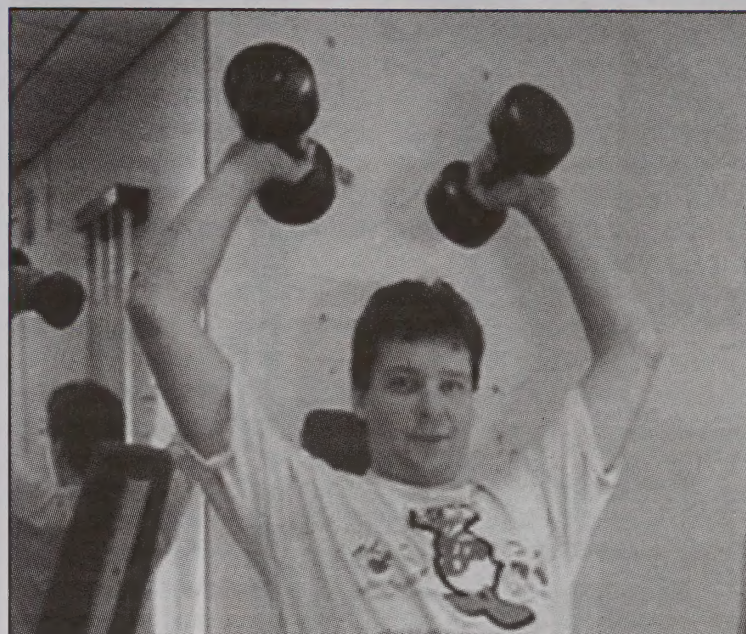
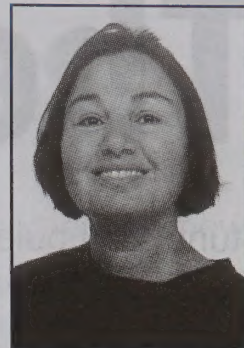
Back to work in Brighton

Mary Howard was on incapacity benefit after a back injury in 1994. With help from the Personal Advisor scheme in Brighton, she has now returned to work.

She told DN: "My biggest fear was that if I tried work and didn't manage, I would lose my benefits. But they reassured me about that."

Mary has now set up as a freelance internet and administration worker, which will allow her to take time off if she needs it because of her disability.

"I had skills but did not know how to put them to use," said Mary. "I would not have returned to work without the support I have been given."





Fit for work: Ian Bullions found a job thanks to an Innovative Scheme

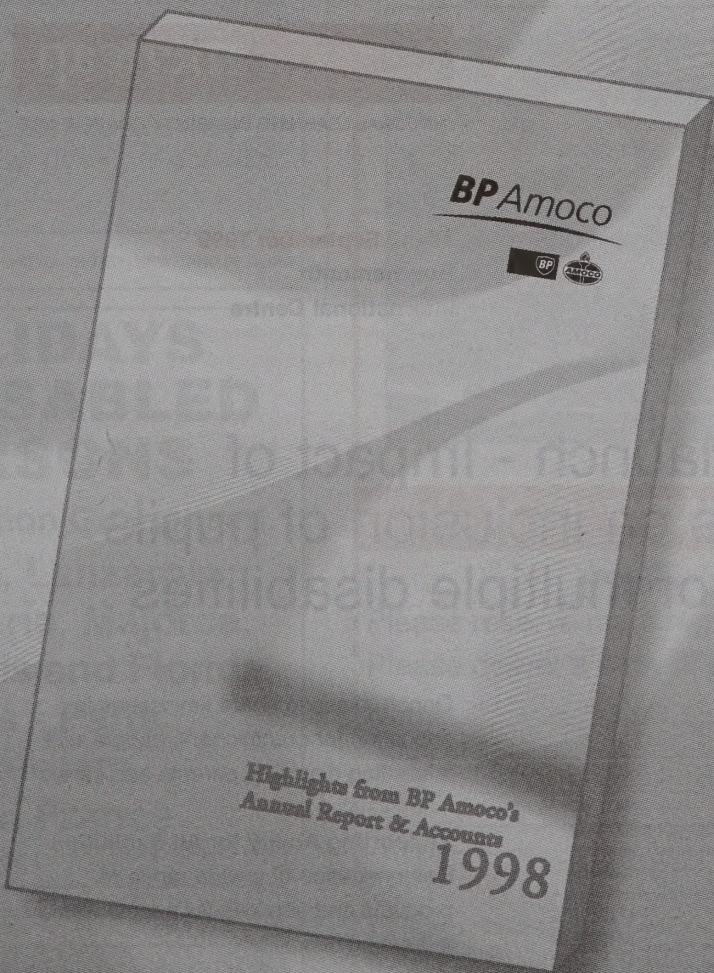
TED COTTRELL

finding jobs might seem low at present.

It seems too early to say if the Innovative Schemes and Personal Advisor programme are a success. Anyone who has found work has only glowing praise, but progress is still not fast enough for some.

- For more information about any of the pilot Innovative Schemes, tel: 0171-712 2171.
- For details of the pilot Personal Advisor Services, tel: 0114-259 4215.

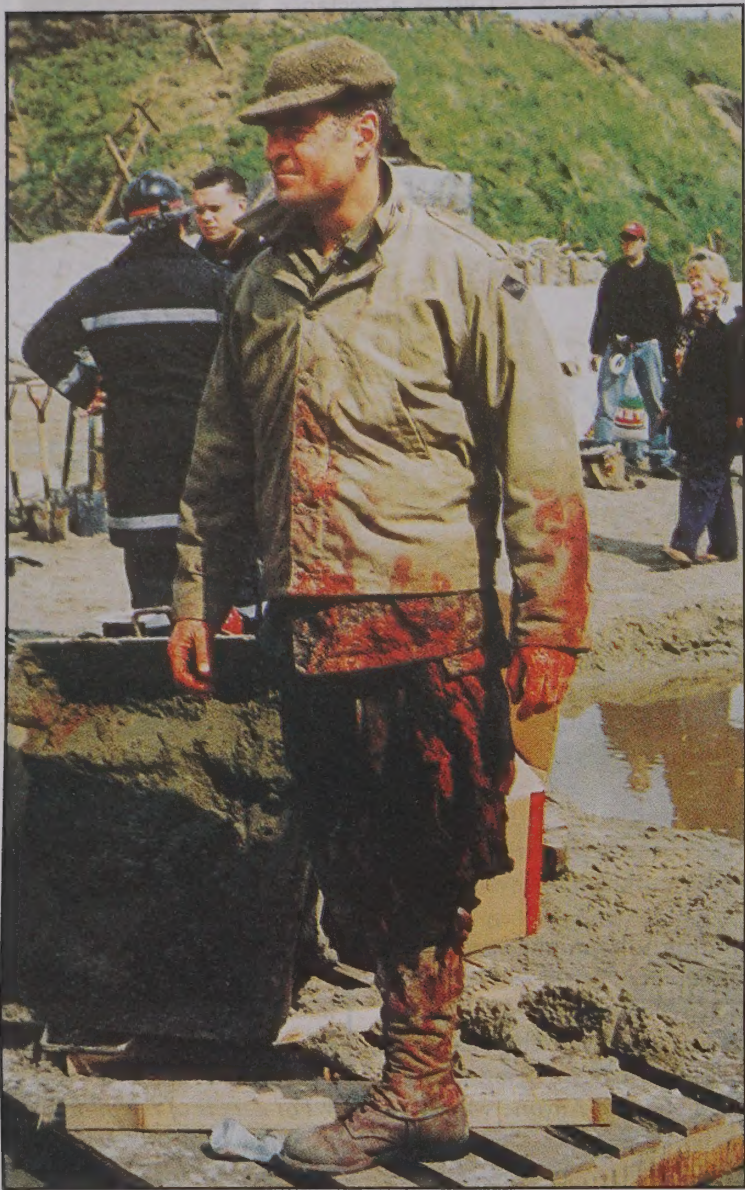





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The fall guy

Stuntman Louie Brownsell appeared in *Saving Private Ryan* and *The Mummy*. Sally Brown talks to him



Blood and gore: Louie on the set of *Saving Private Ryan*

Flying through the air with a package of explosives in your prosthetic leg takes a fair degree of bravery – but that's exactly what 39-year-old Louie Brownsell does for a living. Because the one-legged veteran of films including *Saving Private Ryan* is Britain's only disabled stuntman.

Exeter-based Louie, who uses the stage name Jai Brown, got his big break into international stunt performing when *Saving Private Ryan* director Stephen Spielberg saw him acting in a TV serial.

"He'd been looking for someone like me to train up as a stuntman for *Private Ryan*," Louie said. "There were disabled stuntmen in the US but none here in Britain."

Louie began acting when the recession hit his pub business.

"I sat down and thought 'What can I do with this?' I'd always wanted to be an actor, but I thought it was a bit beyond me."

Then it occurred to him that being a one-legged actor made him unique.

The benefits of a stuntman who can get his leg blown right off or wear a convincing "peg leg" are obvious, and Louie threw himself into stunt



Country life: Louie shows off the leg he made himself

training with Spielberg in Hatfield, Hertfordshire, hoping it would lead him to a successful career.

"I did three months of really tough training – learning to fall, how to 'pad up' and use a harness. It hurt – lots – just becoming physically fit enough to fly through the air."

Several other disabled actors embarked on the training but didn't make it to stage one.

Once his film career had been launched by *Saving Private Ryan*, Louie went on to appear in action adventure

movie *The Mummy* (see review, page 23) where he played a gold-painted Egyptian priest. "I didn't say much," he laughs.

He was also recently approached to appear in a new Tim Burton production.

However, Louie is in dispute about his rate of pay (see news pages), and further jobs may have to be put on hold.

But there's more to Louie than stunts. Earmarked to present *Freak Out*, Channel 4's answer to *From The Edge*, Louie sees his future in TV.

"I want to be a TV presenter," he says. "Then I can just be me. Stunts are not really what I want to do."

Louie is also about to buy a north Devon farmhouse, where he will indulge his passions for working on vintage cars and horse riding, and have frequent visits from his five-year-old daughter. With the welding skills he picked up tinkering with cars, he has managed to make himself an artificial leg that is ideal for his needs.

In his spare time Louie also acts as a counsellor for young amputees at the local hospital.

"Imagine losing your leg – it turns your world upside down. I just go in and show these kids it's not the end of the world."

"People with artificial limbs often have a chip on their shoulder. I've got one on my shoulder," Louie admits. "But you can be positive or negative about it. You have to think 'What can I do with this?' It's down to people's character."

Louie wants others to think as positively as he does.

"If a hundred people read this and one person thinks 'I can do that', that's all I want. To make a difference."

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'Cloning is a mixed blessing'

As the UK continues its cloning ban, Tom Shakespeare calls for measured debate

Another month, and another milestone: several teams of US researchers are now on the verge of producing cloned human embryos.

Such cloning is usually known as "therapeutic", because the aim is to produce cells to treat conditions such as Alzheimer's, as opposed to "reproductive" cloning, which is the process of creating babies with exactly the same DNA as someone else. Reproductive cloning is banned worldwide. Therapeutic cloning is banned in the UK and the Government announced in June that more evidence is needed before it will be allowed here.

Therapeutic cloning is a mixed blessing. Treatments for debilitating conditions would be welcomed by almost everyone, although some religions see anything to do with embryo research as anathema. But, surely, the majority view is that 14-day-old embryos do not have souls or rights – after all, in vitro fertilisation and abortions involve routine destruction of such embryos.

Yet nagging doubts remain. First, there is an important principle about treating living things as ends in themselves, rather than as means to an end. I feel uneasy about creating life just to produce genetic material for others. Yet I do not think an early embryo is a person.



Second, I am concerned that modifying human genes will become increasingly acceptable. The course of research since the first test-tube baby has been to increase intervention.

Boundaries are continually being pushed back, and it may not be long before human reproductive cloning takes place somewhere.

We need a calibrated response to these dilemmas – extreme positions are unhelpful. We need to debate the new possibilities, and there must be firm guidelines about the limits of intervention.

Some processes are clearly wrong, whatever the benefits. The suffering of people with illnesses and impairments is no justification for inhumanity. Behaving ethically means respecting creation, human individuality and the diversity of the population as a whole.

Dr Tom Shakespeare is a research fellow at the University of Leeds.

- The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR) is carrying out a survey on genetics. For a form, tel: 0171-250 3222, ext. 200.
- If you have comments about cloning, send them to DN at the address on p.3.

PHOTO – NORTH NEWS AND PICTURES

Vital steps

Minister for Disabled People Margaret Hodge welcomes the new Commission and defends the Government's latest campaign

Civil rights will move a vital step forward when the Disability Rights Commission Bill receives royal assent later this month.

The next milestone is April 2000 – the inauguration of the Commission. Disabled people will then, for the first time, have a statutory organisation to help enforce their rights and work towards eliminating discrimination.

That won't happen overnight, of course. One of the most important tasks of the new Commission will be to work with disabled people and businesses to promote awareness and understanding. Good practice will be high on the agenda. The best businesses of the millennium will embrace disabled people, not ignore or undervalue them.

The House of Commons has at times been described as a bear pit. Strong and opposing opinions can lead to lively debate! But in taking this landmark piece of legislation, and my first Bill, through parliament, I have had support from all sides.

I have received invaluable advice and assistance from

members of the Disability Rights Task Force and from many disability groups. Thanks to their constructive approach I have been very happy to make a number of changes to the Bill since it was first introduced. I hope they feel I have done them justice.

The last time I wrote (DN, April), I felt that the climate of opinion towards disabled people was changing. Response to the National Disability Campaign launched in June has confirmed my view.

Critics of the campaign have argued that discrimination is society's problem and has nothing to do with disabled people. Outlawing discrimination, they believe, is a job for the Government alone.

Of course, the Government must ensure that disabled people's rights are backed by law. We are doing that and our record speaks for itself.

But it's nonsense to believe that laws alone will defeat prejudice. We have to try to get people to think about their preconceptions and the stereotypes they hold.

Nor can laws be effectively implemented unless people



understand their purpose and the obligations they involve.

These two beliefs are at the heart of our campaign. We need to take society with us, not browbeat people into submission. Ultimately that would only set them against us.

As a direct result of the campaign, national newspapers are beginning to take a serious look at the issues. We are working hard behind the scenes with TV producers, businesses and individuals. At long last people are beginning to open their eyes. They are starting to acknowledge that ability and disability are not mutually exclusive. We've now got to seize the opportunity, keep the momentum going and move forward.

What's in DN next month?



PATRICK HARRISON

- **NEW DDA REQUIREMENTS**
From 1 October, goods and services must be more accessible to disabled people. How will this affect you?
- **BACK TO SCHOOL**
DN's four-page special on inclusive education, further education and going back to college for mature students.
- **FASHION ON A BUDGET**
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- **PARENT'S VOICE**
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DN8/99



Jane Parkinson fears that new safety rules are bad news for her child

My son, aged eight, has fairly severe athetoid cerebral palsy but has been able to integrate part-time into our local primary school.

I feel strongly that mainstream school is where Alistair ought to be, but the success of his placement is now threatened by overly strict implementation of health and safety rules. Helen, his learning support assistant (LSA) at the primary school, has been told she must not support him for walking as she has been doing – he must be wheeled around. Neither must she lift him on her own (he weighs 17kg).

If he is wheeled around and hoisted, he cannot practise weightbearing or walking with support, so he will lose these abilities altogether.

Recently Alistair was not allowed to go on a school trip to an inaccessible museum because staff were not permitted to carry his wheelchair. I registered him as absent that morning and then "accidentally" bumped into his classmates there so that he could take part in the visit.

'Risk is part of life'



Circle of friends: Alistair with classmates at his local school

At his other school, the Pace Centre in Aylesbury, he is taught through conductive education (ie he is taught practical skills for life) and is encouraged to be independent. But his skills will be lost if these restrictions are imposed.

His respite carers' house, where he stays for one 24-hour block a month, cannot be "passed" unless he sleeps downstairs, has no baths and

uses a commode. Until now, Nicola and Tim – family friends in their mid-twenties and both inspiringly energetic and cheerful – have been happy to help him up and down stairs and in and out of the bath. At eight, he doesn't like sleeping downstairs on his own. (Not surprisingly, my own house doesn't pass either and I lift Alistair single-handedly for the rest of the month – but I am

just his mother and cannot sue anyone!)

I feel that health and safety regulations have gone too far.

Surely some element of risk is part of life, and anyone working with disabled people has decided to take that risk on board? I am told that people are injuring themselves by lifting and are suing the authorities. Surely education about how to use one's body safely is part of the answer.

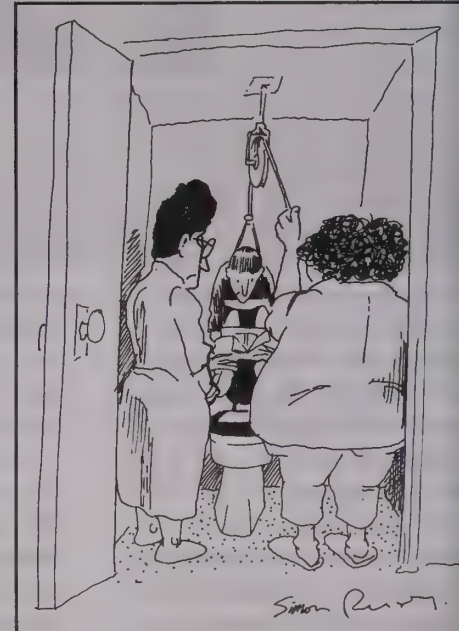
The greatest risk is to the child's self-esteem and rights to privacy. The risk to our society is that we are forced to send our disabled children to specially equipped schools, segregated and wrapped in cotton wool – for whose good?

I feel that these rules are forcing us backwards in a desperate attempt to avoid compensation cases and in the misguided belief that absolute safety can be guaranteed.

At the moment, my son is a positive role model in the community – all

the local children know him, accept him and understand about cerebral palsy.

Doubtless as Alistair gets older, safety will become more of an issue, but I wish I could be reassured that sensitivity to his individual, very private needs and his developing feelings about his body would be given a higher priority by the zealous "manual handling" team which is responsible for implementing the safety regulations.



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Britain bags golds



Take the strain: Michael Ferguson from West Lothian swept the board to win four powerlifting gold medals in the Special Olympics

British athletes with learning difficulties came out on top at the Special Olympics in North Carolina, 26 June-4 July. The teams competed in 14 out of 19 Olympic-style sports, including volleyball, football, basketball, athletics and tennis. They won a total of 185 gold medals, and more medals overall than any of the other 150 countries.

Over the first few days, events were held to ensure participants were pitted against others of similar abilities.

In the final events, Claire McNeil, 16, landed the gold medal for golf, playing for five-and-a-half hours a day over four days.

Michael Ferguson, 18, from West Lothian, Scotland, came first in all three powerlifting

disciplines – squat, bench and deadlift – to take the overall powerlifting gold medal.

And triple gold winner Julian Jeffries, 25, lifted 187.5kg to come top in his section of the powerlifting event. The Cornish lifter takes part in mainstream competitions and is currently junior South West Powerlifting Champion.

Britain's men's basketball team won silver medal overall, losing 40-45 to Argentina.

The Special Olympics were founded in 1968, and Chris Maloney, Gloucestershire swimming coach, kicked off the UK movement in 1976. Since then the games have become an international event – the next Special Olympics take place in Ireland in 2003.

Judo joys

The British blind judo team managed to win eight medals at the German Open Blind Championships, 26 June.

World number one Simon Jackson, 26, from Lancashire, took gold in the under-81kg category, continuing his run of over 130 undefeated matches.

Bright prospect Ben Quilter, 17, from Sussex, won his first senior medal – a silver – in the under-60kg section.

Other golds in this crucial Sydney 2000 qualifier came from Ian Rose, 27, and Chris Shearon, 24.

Silvers went to Darren Kail, 29, and Steve Keith, 27, while Philip Hall, 26, and Lisa Gibson, 27, both managed to land bronzes.

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E-mail: LizHowells@bild-edn-demon.co.uk

Athlete records

A record 317 athletes took part in Disability Sport England's National Junior Athletics Championships in Blackpool, 3-4 July. Over 100 championship records were set at the event for 12-21-year-olds.

West Midlands won overall. Athlete of the Championship awards went to Colin Owens (North West region) and Joanne Butler (Northern).

Basketball victories

Britain's wheelchair basketball teams got off to a good start at the European Championships in the Netherlands. Both won their opening games, 3 July.

The women's team beat Russia 58-11 and the men took a 45-37 win over Sweden.

The men went on to beat Slovenia 72-47, on 7 July, while the women lost out to the Netherlands, 41-21.

In brief

On the road again

DN-sponsored rally driver Paul Hannam is revving up for his next flirt with dirt, 8 August, in Eppynt Ranges, Wales.

Hannam is hoping his Vauxhall Nova will be back on track for this, his first race since crashing the car in May.

He is presently ranked third in his class of the West Wales Rally Championships.

Rugby bronze

Britain nabbed bronze in the European Championships for Wheelchair Rugby, beating the Swiss 28-27 in extra time. The result qualified the British team for the Sydney 2000 Paralympics. Sweden and Germany won gold and silver.

Goalball is go

Britain's male goalball team are also on their way to the Sydney 2000 Paralympics after coming fourth in a qualifying tournament in Canada, 6-16 June. Other teams in the tournament included China, the USA, Kuwait, the Netherlands and Venezuela.

Similar to five-a-side football, goalball is played indoors by participants who are totally blind.

Athletics in August

The first ever European Cerebral Palsy Athletics Championships will take place at the Harvey Hadden Stadium in Nottingham, 12-15 August. For details, tel: 0115-940 1202.

This month's sports page was compiled by Kevin White.

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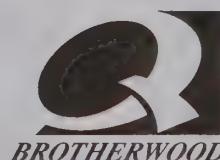
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Website: http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk

Disabled Century let-down

I have now been severely disabled for almost half a century. So it was of great interest to me to hear about three TV programmes on BBC 2 entitled *Disabled Century*.

But what a disappointment. The whole production was a greatly missed opportunity. The series made me feel sad and, I have to admit, very angry.

Having spoken to others, I found that, without exception, their views matched mine.

The first hour of the first programme, which dealt with the First World War, was reasonable, but what about the rest? For instance, there was nothing about the positive effect of the introduction of the polio vaccine in 1956, which prevented many hundreds of deaths and many thousands of children from being crippled.

And where was the mention of the fact that spinal cord injury no longer kills you in six months through kidney failure and other complications?

In reality, the happy fact is that these days most physically

disabled people have reasonably good lives. Many have good jobs and participate in various sporting activities from skiing to parachuting. This state of affairs was never dreamed of even half a century ago.

All I hope is that before long some enterprising TV producer will tell the story as it really is – that in spite of disability there is a life to be lived.

John Prestwich MBE
Kings Langley, Herts

No understanding

Dan Batten's comments on the blessing of the Cornwall coach (*DN, July*) were, to say the least, lacking in understanding.

To me, and I am sure to many others of a variety of faiths, it seems quite natural that "after much hard work and fundraising" those involved would wish to give thanks for the efforts that had been made to provide accessible transport that will benefit many people.

Nancy E Robertson
Harrow, Middx

Government poster campaign

I agree with Rachel Hurst (*DN, July*) that the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) adverts implicitly lay blame on individual impairment rather than on society at large.

The message that, contrary to appearances, disabled people are just like "normal" people *underneath* does nothing to destroy negative stereotyping and encourage full integration.

These posters, it seems, convey an institutionalised consensus that impairment is necessarily analogous to the "strange" and "shocking", a view that can only be challenged if disabled people are empowered to define and project their own collective image.

Tim Vasey
Snainton, Scarborough

The "Kathy is hard to control" poster is offensive for three reasons. It feeds racist stereotypes that Black people, particularly African Caribbean people, are aggressive and hard to

manage. "See the person" and, presumably, not the disability implies that we should not recognise our impairments as an important aspect of our identity. And a poster campaign which suggests that disability is an individual experience completely ignores the environmental, attitudinal and institutional barriers that disabled people face.

The current campaign is a missed opportunity and a gross misuse of public funds. Surely the Government should have learnt from the experiences of Black and ethnic minority communities and adopted an approach which recognises all aspects of disabled people's identity and experiences in a positive way.

Nasa Begum (e-mail)

The "people out there" are individuals and they have to see us as individuals and people. Until they do, we can't do anything much and laws cannot change people's

perceptions; only persuasion can do that. And that, surely, is what this "see the person" poster is trying to do.

Trevor Reed
Leicestershire

The "see the person" campaign is spot on, a great improvement on the awful, patronising TV adverts of a while back.

As a non-disabled person, the posters showed me that disabled people have the same wishes and aspirations as their non-disabled counterparts, using that much undervalued commodity – humour.

Having to read the subtext made me think harder about issues than a traditional sledgehammer, hard-core political approach would have done. The drum-beating, almost professional whinger approach irks me, as it does my disabled friends.

Jon Dunn
London E11
We had many letters – Editor

Arthritis awareness-raising film

The film (*DN, June*) is not, as suggested, intended "to reflect arthritis in a realistic way" but as an over-the-top challenge to stereotypes aimed at people who have little understanding of disability.

It was not commissioned by Arthritis Care but donated by a film group to help us launch a video competition calling for challenging views of arthritis.

The production team gave their services free of charge.

Actors with arthritis have often told us they are reluctant to come out as having arthritis as they feel, and know, it affects their chances of getting a job. This is one of the main points the film makes. It is not until the last scene that the audience realises the hero has arthritis. Anyone who had a significant

impairment through arthritis may have been noticeable in earlier scenes and the whole effect would have been lost. Thus the director cast the best person available for the lead. As a matter of information, the female lead actor has arthritis.

Richard Gutch
Chief executive
Arthritis Care
London NW1

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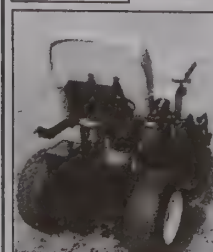


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PC pulse

by Dan Batten

Wembley woe

The world-famous Wembley complex recently sent us a brochure highlighting their latest developments, including facilities for "the visually handicapped". Maybe the enlightened copywriter needs some awareness facilities built into his/her job.

Doctor doom

It's official. According to one of the world's top doctors, the existence of disabled people is a sin. Bob Edwards, who assisted Patrick Steptoe in creating the world's first test-tube baby, has gone on record as saying that, with prenatal scans more widely available, parents have a moral responsibility not to give birth to disabled children. What a shame scans weren't about when Professor Edwards entered the world. His parents could have had a re-think in view of his own severe disability – gross insensitivity.

Win a Chairman

The smart Chairman Kangoo (right), worth £15,000, could be yours for a year, insurance and service included. It is first prize in a DN competition now running with Gowrings Mobility.

Second prize is a Chairman Kangoo for a long weekend.

To enter, you must be a wheelchair user who does not drive and cannot transfer to a car, and your driver must be over

21 with a clean driving licence.

The competition involves putting six benefits of a Chairman into order and writing up to 30 words on what you would do on your Best Day Out if you had a Chairman. If you missed the entry form in July DN, tel: 0171-619 7323 for another one or find details on www.disabilitynow.org.uk

Entry deadline: 6 August 1999



Give it a go: Fed up with residential care in the west country, Ben England came to London determined to live independently. Now he's got a 24-hour care package and a flat from Greenwich social services.

ROD HERMESTON

Get Freedom into Focus

If you have a positive image of disability in a photo, like Ben England (above) – or even a strong negative image – you could win yourself some outstanding prizes in the Leonard Cheshire/Disability Now national photography competition. Closing date: 27 August.

The over-16 winner gets a week's break for two at Leonard Cheshire's Park House Hotel, plus 12 rolls of Kodak film. Second prize is a Kodak Advantix Zoom kit with film.

The under-16 winner will have a day's session at a digital multimedia workshop in London, plus 12 rolls of Fuji film. Second prize is a Yashica Acclaim APS Zoom camera and film. Third prize in each category is an Olympus APS camera and film.

Thanks to Lord Evans of Watford, the winners will now be invited to a House of Lords reception on 29 September.

The competition is open to disabled amateur photographers, either taking the photos or directing someone else.

The judges are photographer Lord Lichfield, model and tv presenter Heather Mills, freelance art director Nic Hutton and DN regular photographer Graham Bool.

For the competition rules, tel: 0171-619 7323 or find details on www.disabilitynow.org.uk

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If you're feeling active or just want to laze by the water, DN has more ideas for this summer

Splash out

Rutland Water really does have something for everyone – Les Wilkes takes a look

Being disabled does not mean that you cannot enjoy the many delights of Rutland Water in the East Midlands.

Olympic teams often train there, but any competent sailor can enjoy the water. Rutland Sailing Club devotes plenty of time to people who just like messing about in boats and it has good facilities for disabled people. There are special launching points and ramps, and the club arranges events and training especially for disabled people. Anglers are also catered for – there are jetties which allow wheelchairs to be manoeuvred safely.

And if it is just a gentle sail you're after – with someone

else at the helm – then that is possible too. The Rutland Belle offers trips and has a lift to help people get aboard.

Rutland's wildlife sanctuary is one of the best in Europe, with around 250 species of birds, and the British Birdwatching Fair (20-22 August) attracts thousands of people. There is an indoor watching centre, and hides are adapted for disabled people.

The Butterfly and Aquatic Centre has an accessible walk-through jungle of free-flying butterflies and birds. But don't look up all the time – there are brilliantly coloured carp and terrapins in the pools too, along with insects, reptiles and even, sometimes, an iguana.

Factfile

Rutland Water Information Centre, Sykes Lane, Rutland Water North Shore, Empingham LE15 8PX, tel: (01572) 653026.
Rutland Sailing Club, tel: (01780) 720292.
Rutland Belle, tel: (01572) 787630.
Butterfly and Aquatic Centre, tel: (01780) 460515.
Nature Reserve and Birdwatching Centre, tel: (01572) 770651.
Rutland Tourist Information Centre, Flores House, 34 High Street, Oakham, tel: (01572) 724329.

On a bicycle made

Fast, fun and good for you too, there's a bike for everyone, says M

When I decided to have my leg amputated, I didn't know if I'd ever be able to cycle again.

A road traffic accident at the age of 22 (I was cycling when I was hit by a car, so I'm told) put paid to my prospects of racing at international

level. I lived cycling and loved it. But in spite of my best efforts and those of the surgeons, my severely broken leg just would not heal. I made one of the biggest decisions I have ever had to make and opted to have it amputated. I'd lost a lot of bone, so my limb was already short (at

best I would have always had to wear a built-up shoe), and my ankle had set solid. Fortunately I still have use of my knee, as my leg was amputated mid-calf.

I wish I'd known then what I have learned over the past 25 years. I have continued to ride an ordinary cycle and to race in time trials against able-bodied people. My times are 25 miles in 1 hour 10 minutes and 50 miles in 2 hours 30 minutes. I've competed in the



Head down: Margaret Biggs on a ten-mile time trial



You've got to hand it to her: trying

BALSA National Cycling Championships and represented Britain in the European Cycling Championship for Disabled People as well.

This gave me the incentive to race on a cycle track. I'd ridden on these before (they are the ones with very steep banking) but not since I'd lost my leg. The new Velodrome had just opened in Manchester, only 25 miles from my base in Warrington. After some coaching I started riding the track league.

I'll never forget my trip to the European games. I went to Germany only to discover that I had no female rider to compete against. I felt utterly deflated, until I was allowed to compete with the above-knee amputee men and came fourth in the 1km track event, just behind the French national champion.

Life's doors continue to open and close. My career in law recently ended as the opportunity emerged for me to join the Cycling Project for the North West as the Wheels for All! development officer. I had been concerned for some time about the lack of help for disabled people who want to



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d too and, even as a "purist"
s, I was very impressed – it's really
fun.
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re in Kielder.

Factfile

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or a full day.

urther information about
els for All!, contact Margaret
s at the Cycling Project,
0161-745 9099.

John Askew had been a
qualified pilot for ten years
when he was involved in a
riding accident five years ago.
As a T12 paraplegic he carried
on flying and is now chairman
of the British Disabled Flying
Club (BDFC).

After buying an ex-Soviet
Yak 52, the biggest challenge
John faced was modifying the
controls and getting them
approved. He contacted the
Delta Foxtrot Club – now the
BDFC – to learn about the
adaptations available to keep
him flying.

With a particular interest in
acrobatics, John started to
participate in national events,
winning the British Aerobatics
Championships (standard
class) in 1998.

One of John's favourite
manoeuvres is the Lomchovak
vertical climb, flick and
tumble. This subjects the pilot
to positive and negative gravity
forces far in excess of the
human body's design specifica-
tions. John describes this as

**"The club aims to help
people access the air, in
gliders, microlights,
balloons and
powered aircraft"**

"maximum excitement". Like
the legendary air ace, Douglas
Bader, he believes his disability
somehow makes it easier to
tolerate extreme G-forces.

John now channels some of
his energy into encouraging
others with disabilities to
experience the freedom of
flying for themselves.

The BDFC is a unique
group which acts as a vital link
between pilots with disabilities
and the UK's flying clubs,
offering advice and technical
guidance to both parties. The
club aims to help as many peo-
ple as possible access the air, in
gliders, microlights, balloons
and powered aircraft. It wants
to help people start flying and
continue flying.

A range of disabilities from
deafness to paraplegia can be
accommodated by the club,
and advice is available on areas
such as suitable aircraft and
UK flying club requirements.
There are growing numbers of
disabled people in the UK who
are enjoying a sense of adven-
ture through flight as pilot or
passenger – the BDFC has 200
members, of whom 50 are
already qualified.

If you have a pilot's licence,
are already learning to fly or
are just thinking about it, the
BDFC will certainly be able to
help by improving some of the
options open to you. It can
also keep you in touch with
what is going on in the world
of aviation.



Up, up and away

Want to feel the wind beneath your wings? Arlene Oldham says
the British Disabled Flying Club could be just what you need

BDFC membership is £10 a
year, which includes a
quarterly newsletter. The club
also holds special flying days
which allow people to experi-
ence the freedom of the skies.
Dates for flying days this
summer are 14 August at
Enstone (Oxfordshire), 5
September at Mona (Anglesey)
and 18 September at Old
Sarum (Wiltshire).

Factfile

*This year John Askew is competing at intermediate level in the
British Aerobatics Championships. The competition takes place
in Peterborough, 3-4 September, and you are welcome to go
along to watch the fun. Call (01487) 832022 for details.
Anyone interested in membership of the BDFC should contact
the club secretary Phil Reeve, British Disabled Flying Club,
Pantiles, The Street, Tendring, Essex CO16 OBL,
tel: (01255) 830198.*

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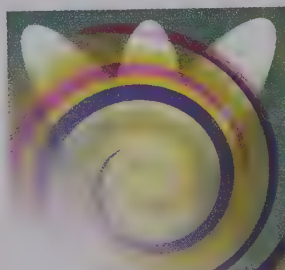
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Summer sorties

From Trafalgar Square tours to touchable trains, Dan Batten suggests some more fun outings for summer

 If the July motoring supplement got your engine revving, why not take a trip to Haynes Motor Museum in Sparkford, Somerset? It houses a collection

of over 250 cars from large American supercars to Minis and motorcycles. Tours can be tailored to suit an individual group's passions, and you can also book activity days, which

could include a ride in a sports car. Go on – have a day that will “tyre” you out. *Entry is £4.95 for adults, £2.95 for children and £3.95 for concessions. For details, tel: (01963) 440804.*



Wow! The £1m Duesenberg at Haynes Motor Museum in Somerset

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 Motability

 The National Railway Museum in York is holding *Please Touch*, 29 September, a free event for groups with special needs. As you might expect, the exhibition gives you the chance to explore all sorts of railway memorabilia and, most importantly, lets you flout that golden rule “don't touch”. For more details call Bob Gwynne, tel: (01904) 686248.

 Visiting London can be extremely daunting, and getting to the biggest sightseeing attractions used to tie a lot of people to an organised tour.

Not any more. Guidephone lets you dial up a commentary on your mobile phone, taking in such sites as Buckingham Palace, Westminster Abbey and Piccadilly Circus, as well as some lesser-known places. A trial commentary is available for Trafalgar Square, tel: 0171-376 6511. Other sites are found on the premium-rate number 0906-302 0518 or www.guidephone.co.uk

 Have you ever stopped to wonder what goes through the mind of an artist's model, sitting stock-still for hours on end? *The Artist's Model: from Etty to Spencer* runs from 23 July until 26 September at Kenwood House, Hampstead, London, looking at the relationship between artist and model from Victorian to modern times. Over 100 works from the likes of Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth will be on display. Admission to the exhibition is £3.50 or £2.50 for concessions. Tel: 0181-348 1286.

 Bradford's National Museum of Photography, Film and Television has just re-opened following an 18-month period of redevelopment. It now claims to be fully accessible and has new galleries, including one dedicated to the successes of British animation. You can also check out some of the film clips showing in the Cubby Broccoli cinema, and “Bond” with other film fans. Admission is free. Tel: (01274) 202030.

Shop till you drop

Shopmobility will help if you can't get around, says Kevin White. And if you don't have a scheme nearby, why not start your own?

If you're a shopaholic or if you simply want to be able to get your own groceries, Shopmobility is there to assist. There are schemes in shopping centres all over the country, and there is nothing to stop you opening your own.

The schemes hire out scooters and wheelchairs for free or for as little as £1. Some even have volunteers who will escort you round the shops.

Anyone can make use of a Shopmobility scheme. The aim is simply to help everyone to do their shopping.

The earliest scheme was founded in Peterborough in 1976 by Roger Goodacre and two others – it was set up with the help of development grants given to the town. The first scheme actually to operate under the Shopmobility name opened in Milton Keynes in 1981 and there are now 230 nationwide. Strangely, there is still no Shopmobility scheme in central London – a shopping

heaven for many people – although there are plans to establish one.

Early schemes were run without central support, but in 1988 the National Federation of Shopmobility (NFS) was established. New schemes are now encouraged to join so that they can follow the guidelines and maintain the standards set by the Federation. The NFS is an independent organisation that funds itself.

Shopmobility schemes are set up in various ways and with different types of support, according to Ann Ansell, national director of the NSF.

"Local authorities may wish to set up a scheme in their shopping centres," she told DN. "Some schemes are set up as registered charities and others are set up by businesses, such as shopping centres."

But all new schemes should approach the NFS for advice, support and an instruction manual. The NFS can advise on



insurance, for example, and it is important that the public can see that a scheme is business-like and adequately covered for accidents.

The NFS knows of two or three schemes which have shut down over the last ten years due to a lack of funding, but over the past year there have been 30 to 40 new schemes which are now making a go of it.

So, if you want access to a Shopmobility scheme but don't have one in your area, why not do yourself and others a favour? Consider setting one up yourself – it might seem a tall order, but it can be done!

The flagship shop

Just six months after opening in 1993, Burton-on-Trent Shopmobility had paid back its East Staffordshire Borough Council loan of £20,000. The scheme has since proved so successful it has become a flagship for the organisation, winning an award from the NFS in 1995 for being the best in the country.

"We have been giving advice to people who want to start Shopmobility schemes for the past four years," says manager Julie Hawk. "People either come and see us or we go to them."

Burton-on-Trent makes no charge for its loans, but donations are welcome. It also lends people equipment while they are on holiday or recovering from a stay in hospital.

"I think it is an excellent scheme," said 67-year-old Betty Salisbury, a regular user of the Burton-On-Trent Shopmobility scheme. "It has improved my way of life – I can now get out and about. The staff are helpful and pleasant. They always make sure that the right people get the right equipment."

Contact the Burton-on-Trent scheme, tel: (01283) 515191.

If you want further information about existing schemes or setting up a new one, contact the National Federation of Shopmobility, 85 High Street, Worcester, WR1 2ET, tel: (01905) 617761.

Julie Hawk or Jane Atton at Burton-On-Trent Shopmobility would also be happy to help you out if you're considering starting a scheme in your own area, tel: (01283) 515191.

A lively scheme in Liverpool

The Liverpool scheme, based in the Clayton Square shopping precinct, has been running for six years. Membership is £10 a year and there is a £1 charge for scooters and wheelchairs. Non-members are charged £2.50 and have to provide two forms of identification. Booking 48 hours in advance is advised.

Shop organiser Ann Molyneux says the scheme is very popular, but they do have to keep an eye on some customers.

"We had a volunteer who hired a scooter for lunchtimes and weekends," she told DN. "Whenever he brought it back it was always covered in mud and grass. It turned out that he played golf and used the scooter as a caddy."

For information about the Liverpool Shopmobility scheme, tel: 0151-708 9993.

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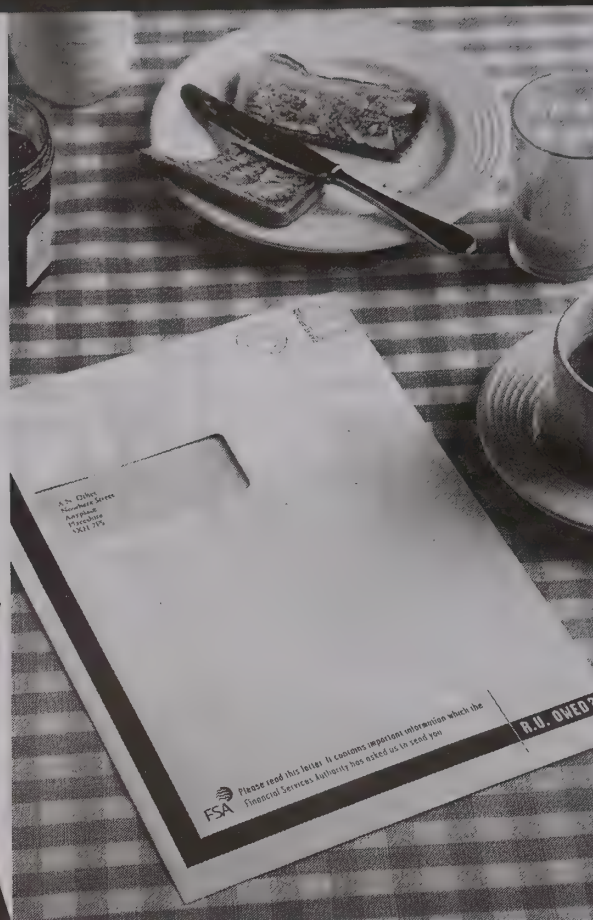
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THEY .O.U.

Television

Paul Darke

It's a long time ago now, but I wanted to mention *The Disabled Century Debate* (BBC 2, 10 June). This seemed unconnected, except in title, to *The Disabled Century* series. It wandered aimlessly around the issues with a "softly-softly" approach. Rachel Hurst saved the day by affirming the social model forcefully – that social barriers like access constrain disabled people – in opposition to Margaret Hodge's desire for us to just "see the person".

Appointment with Death (C4, 14 June), a look at the life and work of the active euthanasia doctor Jack Kevorkian, was a wonderful documentary that showed Kevorkian as the slaughterer of the innocents (he claims over a hundred disabled people). Kevorkian sealed his own fate by admitting the deaths while claiming that his victims had chosen to die.

Everyman: Days of Healing (BBC 1, 20 June) followed some disabled and ill people seeking cures from healers. It was interesting enough and had a cosy fly-on-the-wall feel, but after the Glen Hoddle affair I think we have had enough of this kind of thing.

Malcolm and Barbara – a Love Story (ITV, 24 June) was a moving account of Barbara's physical and emotional struggles as her husband Malcolm developed Alzheimer's disease. It was a tragic tale of love, life and liberty, slightly marred by being too medical and voyeuristic in places. Well done ITV for deciding to run the film in peak programming time.

So You Think You're a Good Driver (BBC 1, 26 June) was an example of how broadcasters are taking an integrationist approach to disabled people: including disability in one episode of a mainstream series. It was about an older male invalid trike user taking to the wheel of an "ordinary car". Informative and well made.

Rear Window (C5, June 26) was a recent television film remake of Hitchcock's suspense classic starring the newly disabled Christopher Reeve. It was embarrassing in contrast to the original which had been on only a few weeks earlier and further marred by Reeve plugging the idea that a cure is just around the corner for spinal injuries.

It was, however, less embarrassing than *The People v Jerry Sadowitz* (C5, 30 June) featuring the disabled comic Tony Gerrard. Sad it was, funny it was not.



Fitting praise: *The Last Freak Show* is yet another great Graeae production

Theatre

Dan Batten

Fittings: The Last Freak Show tells the story of Gusty and his troupe of "freaks" en route to the Millennium Dome, where they hope to cash in by showing off their "talents".

The focus is intense. Each character delivers a monologue on their path into Gusty's sideshow. Gusty himself tells of his Russian origins in a voice not unlike Vlad the Impaler. Birdwoman Avia muses how she used to fly as a child, while Wobble Boy describes how he is told to "wobble more" to appear more freak-like to the audience. A snipe at those who mock people with hidden

disabilities comes from Aqua, who is ridiculed for appearing "normal" because she turns into a mermaid only when water is thrown on her.

Sign Person's baby is a sly dig at disabled people's supposed inability to have a sexual relationship. She has an abortion when she finds out the child will be "impaired". This works well: to hear a disabled person spouting certain traditional views is a great way of ridiculing such attitudes.

Another superb effort from Graeae. Making the audience aware that they are watching people who differ from society's notion of "perfect" in a voyeuristic way makes for uncomfortable but entertaining viewing.

Edinburgh Festival, from 4 August, tel: 0131-556 6550.

Art

Adam Reynolds

For many art students summer is a time of stress as they put up the shows by which they will be judged. Among them this year is James Lancaster, whose work I saw recently at Hereward College and the Showcase Galleries in Coventry.

Art schools have been notoriously inaccessible – things are starting to change. One advance is that the specialist residential college at Hereward now collaborates with Bretton Hall in Yorkshire – students can follow Bretton Hall's BA in Fine Art while living at Hereward and getting the support they need there. James Lancaster will be the first graduate to have taken this route.

Lancaster's work centres on the contrasts and connections between mind and body. His paintings and installations are

uncompromisingly abstract.

The earliest piece was a series of three canvases, pale, abstract and dominated by vertical lines. Beneath these hung three photocopies of the canvases, presented identically. The tension between the "real" object and its imitation was fascinating. The knowledge that they were about breathing and using a ventilator simply adds another layer of meaning.

The main piece consisted of a room covered in violent zig-zags. The effect was visually – and physically – overwhelming. My temples were throbbing. It is this state that the artist is investigating, not sadistically, but to convey the effect of physical pain on the mind.

Artistically, Lancaster's work draws on Bridget Riley's *Op Art* experiments of the mid-sixties, now being shown again at the Serpentine Gallery. His work explores the borderland between mind and body and is strongly rooted in the artist's personal experiences of life on the edge.

Look out for

• The Edinburgh Festival, 8-30 August, includes two fringe shows: *Scary Antics* (DN, July), 17-21 August, and *In Remembrance* (wartime poetry and theatre), which is performed by two disabled actors, 17-30 August. For information, tel: 0131-226 5257, minicom: 0131-220 5594.

• The High Spin dance company is giving a free showing of *Blind Date White Noise* (DN, April) at the Royal Festival Hall in London, 4 August. High Spin is run by Carousel, a charity which aims to make the arts accessible to people with learning difficulties. Royal Festival Hall, tel: 0171-960 4242. Carousel, tel: (01273) 234734.

Film

Simon Minty

The Mummy begins in 1230BC with an Egyptian priest being mummified for having an affair with the Emperor's woman. The film then leaps forward to the 1920s, when a group of hapless people decide to find the treasure of the tombs.

Sound familiar? You're right, this is a poorly scripted rehash of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

It is meant to be a horror film, yet even the cast never seem to be frightened. It also tries to be a romantic comedy but only occasionally raises a ripple of laughter. To a degree it

succeeds in being an action adventure film – the amazing special effects do their work.

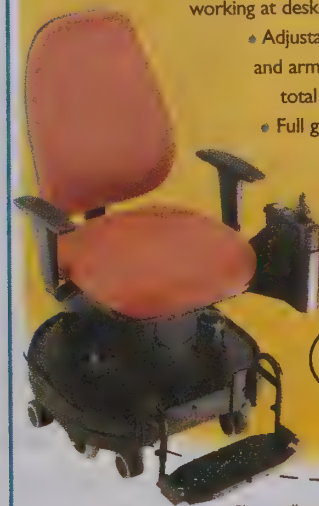
In terms of disability portrayal, I must confess I left the cinema bemused. There are references to impairments, such as a man becoming blind, and the film (of course) associates facial disfigurement with evil. Early in the film there is an assassin who has a prosthetic arm which (of course) is a lethal blade. Disabled stuntman Louie Brownsell (see *Profile*, p10) completely passed me by – which I suppose is probably a good thing.

The film somehow avoids being unbearable – but only just.

Simon Minty replaces Michael Turner as DN's film reviewer.

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Bigger than ever and boasting the latest in driving developments – David Griffiths checks out the 1999 Mobility Roadshow

Cool for cars

Billed as the biggest ever, with around 200 exhibitors and 25,000 visitors, there can be no doubt that the ninth Mobility Roadshow at the Transport Research Laboratory in Crowthorne, Berkshire, was a shop window for the world. People came from as far as

France, Germany and the USA to see what was on offer.

This year, the Roadshow was organised by the charity Mobility Choice, which is supported by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions. It was good to hear Glenda Jackson, Minister of Transport, reiterating the

Government's commitment to the disabled driver and public transport.

It was virtually impossible to cover everything at the show even with careful planning. Apart from some practical gripes – road signs prolific or non-existent, no foyer and some horrendous queues at the

food outlets (whose counters were out of the reach of wheelchair users) – there were certainly lots of great new things on display this year.

Alfred Bekker had two of the smartest vehicles at the show – matching white Dodge Voyagers, one with basic modifications and the other offering more high-tech features, such as remote miniature steering. Prices start at £16,021.

On to the people at Brotherwood Automobility, who hope the Vauxhall Zafira conversion will replace the much-loved Prairie. I hope to test it out shortly – those of you

who are still hanging on to old Prairies, your prayers may be answered soon. The Zafira will start at £20,987.

Nearby, Gowrings were making much of DN's prize of a year's free use of a Renault Kangoo, while Jubilee Automotive Group were showing what can be done with a Suzuki Waggon R+ (from £8,995). It is a neat vehicle which seems to accommodate a wheelchair very well.

Just one lonely motorhome, built by Marquis Motorhomes, stood at the edge of the outside display area. Access is via a semi-automatic lift mounted externally. That is neat enough, but the van is not so practical inside. True, there is space down the centre aisle for a wheelchair user, but there is then no room to turn or allow other passengers to get through. And it's a pity they chose Peugeot rather than Ford or Mercedes, since so many users of these vehicles want automatic transmission. Prices are from £23,995 on the road.

For dreamers, Jim Doran had converted a scintillating Renault Spyder. It's no boy



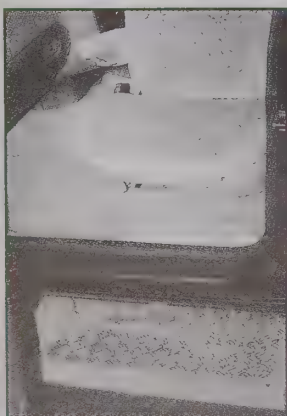
Not so smart: The Swatch-designed Smart Car looks good, but try fitting your wheelchair in the back



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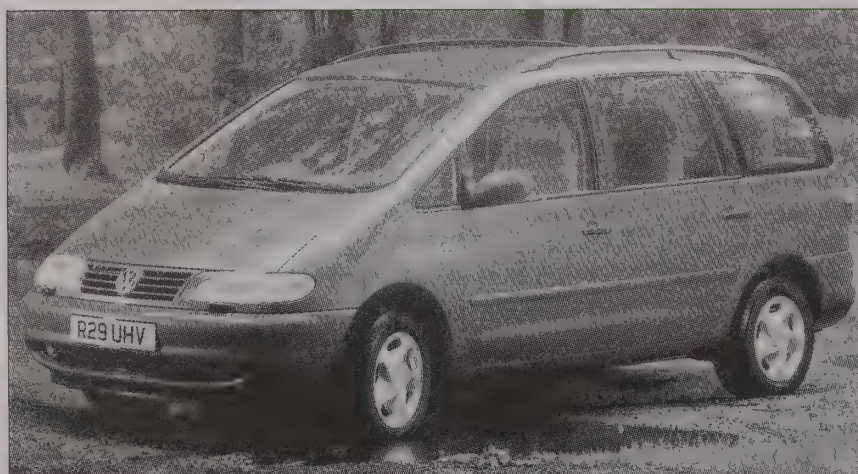
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Serious fun for a serious driver: Jim Doran's converted Renault Spider

JOHN FRYE



racer job this one – it is a serious car for a serious driver. Jim Doran's electric clutch is supplied and fitted for £1,200 and hand controls cost £300.

Not all innovations need to be big to attract attention. One of the main difficulties with hoists when using them in cars is the need to remove the slings in transit. Parry Hoists were showing slings for use with their rooftop loaders and which are comfortable enough for

passengers to remain in. Hoists start at £849 including fitting.

Gerald Simonds is now doing the Travel Wheelchair, which folds up easily into a compact space. It's not made for sitting in for long, but it is handy. The only trouble is the price: £895 plus VAT.

The silly season entry was undoubtedly the Smart car. Can this really be a Mercedes? Someone had managed to up-end a wheelchair and wedge it

into the parcel shelf in an attempt to make the vehicle look disability friendly. It's eye-catching, but the Smart car is not what most disabled users need. It's £6,400 on the road.

I found it sad that the medical advisor for the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority was absent this year – the Roadshow used to give people a chance to talk to the person who is really responsible for their motoring safety.

But the best thing this year was meeting so many people wanting a car of their own without using Motability – and this at a time when Motability contract hire deals have never been better. One woman was adamant: "It might be second-hand, but it will be *mine*." Perhaps the spirit of the independent disabled driver is returning at long last?

Opening time: Lord Snowdon, a newcomer to the Roadshow, was impressed by the eco-friendly Toyota Prius, whose electric/petrol engine produces 90 per cent fewer toxic emissions than other cars. Opening the show, he praised legislation that will make public transport accessible. But he said rail travel can still be "desperate" and an "accessible" taxi he had taken needed a screwdriver for the ramp. As provost of the Royal College of Art, he brought some students of industrial design to the show. "We need to concentrate on the world of design for everyone in the community," he said.

Contacts

Alfred Bekker, tel: (01377) 241700.
 Brotherwood Automobility, tel: (01935) 872603.
 Jim Doran Controls, tel: (01203) 460833.
 Gowrings Mobility, tel: (01635) 529500.
 Jubilee Automotive Group, tel: 0121-502 2252.
 Marquis Motorhomes, tel: 0800-267 777.
 Parry Car Hoists, tel: (01978) 780279.
 Smart Car UK, tel: 0500-123 456.
 Gerald Simonds, tel: (01296) 436557.

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DN readers can get the bookchair at a special price of £15 plus £2.50 p&p from Bookchair, PO Box 24533, London E17 7SH, tel: 0181-520 5678. Please state your colour preference. The bookchair usually retails at around £20.

 Those masters of sticky stuff, Dycem, have gone online with their Dycem Non-Slip store.

For the uninitiated among you, the company makes an amazing non-slip material which has many uses, one of the most popular being the place mat.

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Non-sticky sticky stuff: Dycem's non-slip material

you slip around your neck and connect to the phone, and sound will be transmitted direct to your hearing aid. The loop has a built in microphone, leaving your hands free as you talk. The loopset costs £60 and is available from phone shops. Contact the Nokia Store for details, tel: 0171-437 4380.




Wired for sound: the new Nokia loopset

DN cannot guarantee the quality, availability or price of any of the products described in this article.

Why on earth don't they ...

Trevor Kent knows what would improve his son's life – someone just has to invent it

 What my teenage son Warwick needs (apart from a quieter music system!) is an electric wheelchair with a hoist attached to it.

As far as we know, no such device exists at present, but just think how it would change our lives.

No more fears when we're out and about that we won't be

able to find a couple of helpful strangers to lift Warwick on to the loo. No more problems with low tables in eating places – I could hoist him into cafe chairs, the car or a cinema seat. Need I go on?

I know it will probably take the skills of James Bond's Q to design such a thing, but it would definitely be worth the effort.

So, come on you wheelchair boffins, get on with it!

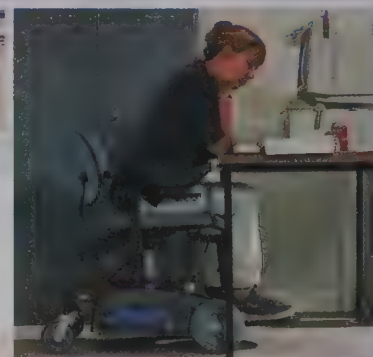


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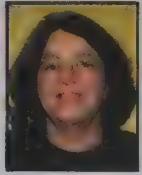
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Your stars

By DN's astrologer Marion Stanton



August is of major significance. The total eclipse of the sun will form a grand cross with an opposition to Uranus in Aquarius squaring an opposition between Saturn in Taurus and Mars in Scorpio. Anyone affected by this will be meeting some solid opposition or a total bedrock of support.

Many astrologers forecast an apocalypse, or at least more devastation than usual (natural or man-made). I believe life will go on – just with a little more intensity than usual.

LEO (24 July-23 Aug)

The eclipse is taking place in your sign. This could make you a force to be reckoned with. Let's hope the things you are pushing for are the right ones! Try not to be ruthless in your attempts to realise your ambitions. You could hurt yourself and others.

VIRGO (24 Aug-25 Sept)

Venus turns retrograde in your sign this month. This could bring an unexpected cooling-off period in a close relationship. Be patient. Focus on giving a little good fortune to those who have been knocked for six by the eclipse.

LIBRA (24 Sept-23 Oct)

Your finances should improve, but you need to ensure you are considerate of others to avoid further setbacks. If you've got it, give generously. At the very least be kind and stay out of trouble.

SCORPIO (24 Oct-22 Nov)

You have Mars in your sign, but this is an angry planet and it could ignite an unpleasant spark in you. Use your energy for good rather than evil.

SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov-21 Dec)

The best will in the world won't budge you an inch at the moment. Try to

focus your attention on friends who might be having a tough time from the total eclipse.

CAPRICORN (22 Dec-20 Jan)

The eclipse is likely to affect you like a nagging toothache rather than a major cataclysm. Irritations will pursue you so you might as well sit tight and be philosophical. It will pass in time.

AQUARIUS (21 Jan-19 Feb)

Aquarians will feel the full blast of the eclipse. Uranus rules Aquarius, but it is an unstable planet and you cannot trust it this month. Try not to make any big steps or decisions this month.

PISCES (20 Feb-20 Mar)

Despite the tension you might be feeling inside, Pisces could be the sign to calm the troubled waters many will find themselves in during August. You need to be willing to give your support to others.

ARIES (21 Mar-20 Apr)

You might want to unleash feelings of anger but that will help no-one. Any negative energy you give out lacks direction. Try instead to use your self-belief to be a rock to others who are less sure of themselves.

TAURUS (21 Apr-21 May)

The eclipse has a direct effect on you – and it may be felt as a constriction on your plans. You will be inclined to deal with this by playing the victim or the tyrant. Neither of these tactics will bring you long-term gains.

GEMINI (22 May-22 June)

There will be relief from difficulties in a close relationship. But it is likely that your partner is not telling you everything. Play your cards close to your chest – you could be in for a waiting game in August.

CANCER (23 June-23 July)

You will weather the storm of the eclipse better than others. Your energy will be positive and you can afford to lend a little to others. But watch out for unusual ideas or proposals – try to keep to the straight and narrow.

Scribble pad



Answers on page 29
COMPILED BY REBECCA REYNOLDS

Candid Dan

Film mania ruled in June.

A friend was missing her old mates in London, so

yours truly got said miscreants to record goings-on with Ollie's video camera.

Ian, with aspirations to work in film, assumed the role of cameraman with aplomb. From shimmying around Safeway to performing one's ablutions, the tape rolled.

Humorous events aplenty were captured, including a 3am cab ride with two extremely smashed gents and a bemused cabbie.

But attempts at culture were short-lived. A poetry section started nicely with some Auden. Then my friend Dr Windsor contributed a tale – Eskimo Nell was the height of refinement compared to his obscene ode.

A triumph in the pub quiz also featured. Cheating aplenty occurred, courtesy of my mobile phone. If Chris Tarrant lets you phone a friend, why couldn't we?

Less tasteful were some of the out-takes. One involved yours truly being followed into a pub loo and having the door of my temporary dwelling place kicked open, with four faces shouting "Surprise!" I was not amused.

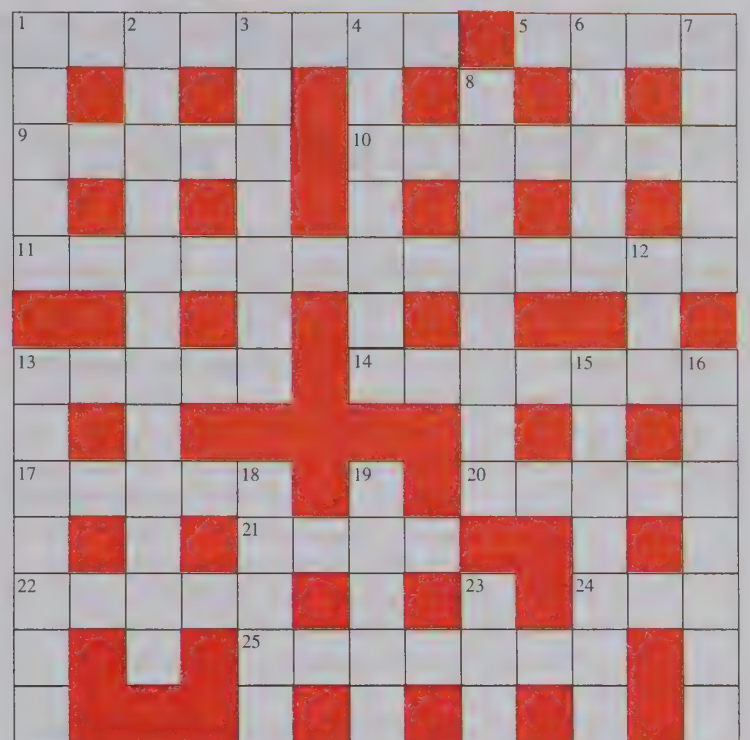
The end product, although slightly ragged, managed to cause mass hilarity. So confident are the production crew (me) of its quality that the Beeb's Community Programme Department is going to get a copy. Watch out – such high-class entertainment will double the licence fee.



DN's crossword sponsored by

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ACROSS

1. Immoral or degenerate (8)
5. Halt (4)
9. Big (5)
10. Same try (anag – 7)
11. End an argument (4,3,4,2)
13. Wood nymph (5)
14. Political cupboard? (7)
17. White tree (5)
20. Large hall (5)
21. Wilfred..., war poet (4)
22. Subdued (5)
24. Zodiac sign (3)
25. American rubbish? (7)

DOWN

1. Enemy of Dr Who (5)
2. Disabled Irish artist (7,5)
3. Stubbornly determined person (7)
4. Mad coin (anag – 7)
6. Motif (5)
7. Fork out (3,2)
8. Turkish city (8)
12. Employ (3)
13. Disaster or flop (7)
15. Party snacks (7)
16. Noddy's home (7)
18. Minister for disability issues (5)
19. Organ of the body (5)
23. Supporter (3)

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Send your letters to: Ann Darnbrough, Disability Now, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW or email editor@disabilitynow.org.uk

I'm frantic with worry

I think it is possible my mother may be showing symptoms of dementia and I am frantic with worry.

I don't think I have ever seen any correspondence in your column about Alzheimer's disease and the shattering effect it has on people's lives. Mostly, it seems, people do not want to talk about this – it is just too frightening.

Do any of your readers have experiences or ways of coping that they could share with us?

Jennie, Wolverhampton

I am extremely sorry to hear your concerns about your mother. Does she have similar worries? Because it would be very important that she discusses any worries of this kind with her doctor. There are many conditions which may explain the symptoms she is experiencing.

You may find it helpful to read *Living in the Labyrinth*. Its author, Diana Friel McGowin, has Alzheimer's disease and founded a support group in her home town of Orlando, Florida. In her book Diana relives the good days and the bad, confronting ethical issues such as the right to die, living wills, support groups and care for people in the early stages. She describes how important it is for people to meet together when their condition is in the early stages.

Harry Cayton, director of the Alzheimer's Disease Society, describes the book as a "remarkable story by any measure ... remarkable for its courage and determination ... remarkable that she was able to write it at all".

The Alzheimer's Disease Society would also be glad to advise you via its helpline. They have about 300 branches and support groups and I am sure you would find some of their publications very helpful.

God's gift

Browsing through old DN's, I was shocked to see a letter written to you under the title "Living will is the way".

I would like to say this. If our life is God's gift to us and the way we live our life is our gift to God, what right do we have to take it upon ourselves to destroy that gift, no matter what it entails? I am in my forties and have suffered a lot of pain since birth. If my life had been terminated at an early age because of all the pain I was in, I would not have had the opportunity of having the wonderful memories of what I have achieved.

Lorraine, West Midlands

You do say "if" our life is God's gift to us, and many people do not believe in God. They may feel that having compassion for fellow human beings is their highest concern.

For those who have never encountered living wills, they are no more than statements which allow people to leave instructions about the medical treatment they want to have, in case there comes a time when they are no longer capable of

making or communicating their own decisions.

Apartment problems

My problem concerns the difficulties I am having in the council flat I have been living in for the last 23 years.

I have brittle bones and am a wheelchair user. I have great difficulty opening the communal entrance doors as they are situated on a slight slope and open outwards.

This means I have to pull open the door, slide myself backwards, throw the doors open as best I can and then make a dash for it.

I have been on the council exchange list since 1990 and have been told I am at the top of it. But they send me to see places that are inaccessible and most unsuitable for me.

I also have a Motability car and I really need a driveway. At present I often have to park way down the street, then negotiate two kerbs – not an easy task if I am bringing in bags of shopping.

I have been in touch with all kinds of people, including local

councillors, my MP, Tony Blair, social workers and the Brittle Bone Society.

Some people have been really supportive, but I still don't get anywhere. What else can I do?

Christine, Manchester

If it is going to take a long time to move to a new flat, you could see if your present home and its surroundings can be adapted so you can manage more easily.

As far as the building's communal door is concerned, might it not be a solution for the council to rehang it so that it opens inward? That would probably make access to your block much simpler.

I can see it would be best if you had your own driveway, but in the meantime couldn't you try to get a designated parking space right outside the entrance to your flat?

Under the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 (as amended by the Road Traffic Act 1991), local authorities are permitted to designate on-street parking places for disabled people and they can mark the road for that purpose.

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Tel: 01626 853050

Living in the Labyrinth, £12.95 (plus £1 p&p), Mainsail Press, 6 Parsonage Street, Cambridge CB5 8DN, tel: (01223) 350818.

Contact the Alzheimer's Disease Society at Gordon House, 10 Greencoat Place, London SW1P 1PH, helpline: 0845-300 0336.

Did you know?

DN's website has a guest page on which you can write non-confidential messages – use it if you think other readers will be able to answer a question you might have or to give other people information about your organisation or experiences. Why not take a look?

The guest page and the rest of the DN website can be found at <http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk>

• Help

I'm a disabled researcher studying the problems encountered by working age people with hidden disabilities, who are in or seeking employment and have experienced further or higher education. I am looking for people who would be willing to complete a questionnaire, with possible telephone interview. If you can help contact Fiona Boyd, University of Sunderland, Priestman Building, Green Terrace, Sunderland SR1 3PZ, tel: 0191-266 0116, e-mail: fiona.boyd@sunderland.ac.uk

Winged Fellowship Trust are carrying out a national survey looking at the quality of respite/short term breaks available to disabled people and carers. They would like to hear people's experiences to compile a confidential report to be published 17 October. Please write to Suzanne Butters, Communications Manager, Winged Fellowship Trust at 23b New Street, Salisbury SP1 2PH, or tel: (01722) 332768.

• What's on

Cancer Alternative Information Bureau (CAIB) will hold a two day seminar on alternative and complementary methods of cancer control and prevention, 13-14 September, London. Topics to be covered include the cause of cancer, whether it can be controlled by alternative means and whether it can be avoided by preventative means. Lectures include healing, homeopathic medicine and lifestyle changes. Cost and full details from Tina Cooke, CAIB, PO Box 285, 405 Kings Road, London SW10 0BB, tel: 0171-266 1505.

AbilityNet, the computer technology charity, will hold a one day workshop, *Enabling Technology - Low Cost, No Cost!*, on 23 September, London. It's aimed at professional advisers, employers preparing for the DDA, IT specialists and individual users. Cost and details from Course Administrator, AbilityNet, PO Box 94, Warwick CV34 5WS, tel: (01926) 312847.

Retinoblastoma (Rb) Society will hold their *Annual Day*, 25 September, London, looking at the achievements and experiences of Rb children. You can meet other individuals and parents, and there will be workshops on the genetics of Rb. Contact Jenny Coates, The Retinoblastoma Society, c/o Academic Department of Paediatric Oncology, St Bartholomew's Hospital, London EC1A 7BE, tel: 0171-600 3309.

Henshaw's Society for the Blind will hold a millennium *Ultimate Borneo Challenge*, to raise £100,000. Entrants will scale the 4,000m Mount Kinabalu, mountain bike for 180km through rainforest, white water raft the River Pada and scuba dive in the Pacific. Full details from Joanna Parry, Henshaw's Challenge Event Co-ordinator, John Derby House, 88-92 Talbot Road, Old Trafford, Manchester M16 0GS, tel: 0161-872 1234.

RNIB will be holding a series of *Professional Development/Open Days* from the end of 1999 through to October 2000. They include low vision/visual impairment awareness, employment rehabilitation and enabling technology. All are based in Loughborough. For full details of each day contact Michelle Drain, RNIB Vocational College, Radmoor Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 3BS, tel: (01509) 611077, fax: (01509) 232013.

• Information

Age Concern has published the second edition of *CareFully - a handbook for home care assistants*, informing domiciliary care staff about qualifications. Each chapter (four are new) relates to an NVQ unit; a useful resource for those aiming for S/NVQ Level 2. £12.99, from Age Concern England Mail Order Department, 1268 Astral Road, London SW16 4ER, tel: 0181-765 7203, or from bookshops, ISBN 0 86242285 X.

The Rehabilitation Resource Centre, City University London invites entries for the annual *ReHab Network Awards*, for individuals who feel their work - or their organisation's work - "enables disabled people to achieve their full potential in relation to work" in an innovative way. Entry forms and details from the Centre at City University, Northampton Square, London EC1V 0HB, tel: 0171-477 8377. Closing date: 7 September.

The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust is offering Year 2000 Travelling Fellowships to those wanting to carry out projects abroad, either trade, craft or profession. They're open to UK citizens and no special qualifications are needed. For full details send an SAE (22cm x 11cm) to the

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1. Decadent
5. Stop 9. Large 10. Mastery
11. Kiss and make up
13. Dryad 14. Cabinet
17. Birch 20. Lobby 21.
Owen 22. Cowed 24. Leo
25. Garbage
DOWN: 1. Dalek 2. Christy
Brown 3. Diehard
4. Nomadic 6. Theme 7. Pay
up 8. Istanbul 12. Use
13. Debacle 15. Nibbles
16. Toytown 18. Hodge
19. Heart 23. Fan

Trust at 15 Queen's Gate Terrace, London SW7 5PR, tel: 0171-584 9315. Closing date for applications: 22 October 1999.

The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation has updated its guide *If Only I'd Known That A Year Ago*. 17 chapters include benefits, sport, equipment and transport. It also has useful addresses of disability organisations. £5, from RADAR, 12 City Forum, 250 City Road, London EC1V 8AF, tel: 0171-250 3222.

• Video top five

- 1. THE MASK OF ZORRO** (Columbia Tristar): Film version of the swash-buckling hero.
 - 2. SAVING PRIVATE RYAN** (CIC): Spielberg's war epic with Tom Hanks at the helm.
 - 3. RUSH HOUR** (EV): Jackie Chan in dull flick saved by its martial arts action.
 - 4. THE NEGOTIATOR** (Warner): Hostage negotiating thriller following the usual lines.
 - 5. BLAZE** (EV): Wesley Snipes as a leather-clad avenger.
- Chart supplied by MIRB.
Word-for-word captions

• Useful websites

REGIONAL SITES

Disability Nottinghamshire Online:

<http://www.innotts.co.uk/disabilitynotts>

Gateshead Council on Disability:

<http://www.disabilitygateshead.org.uk>

Ideas in Motion (Merseyside action group):

<http://www.merseyworld.com/iim>

North Dorset Disability Information Service:

<http://members.aol.com/norddis4qx/default.htm>

Southwark Disablement Association:

<http://www.sda.dircon.co.uk>

Stoke-on-Trent City Council's Access Pages:

<http://www.stoke.gov.uk/accessweb/index.html>

CHARITIES

Deafblind UK Scotland: <http://www.deafblindscotland.org.uk>

Direct Action Network (DAN):

<http://www.disabilitynet.co.uk/groups/dan/index.html>

Down's Heart Group: <http://www.downs-heart.downsnet.org>

ME Association Young People's Group:

<http://www.cix.co.uk/~meaypg/index.htm>

Royal Association in aid of Deaf People:

<http://www.royaldeaf.org.uk/royaldeaf>

EDUCATION

British Association of Teachers of the Deaf:

<http://www.batod.org.uk>

National Association for Adult Learning (NIACE):

<http://www.niace.org.uk>



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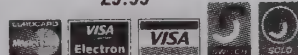
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Stop Press

News about the provisions of the **Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) coming into force in October 1999**

A new handbook - Notes on the Disability Discrimination Act as at May 1999 - written by David Ruebain is essential reading for organisations committed to promoting good practice under the Act. Includes sections on the impact and interpretation of the Act to date and guidance on the new regulations. For your copy please send a cheque/postal order for £10, payable to David Levene & Co to the address below. Contact David Ruebain if your organisation would like training on the DDA.

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Wiltshire & Swindon Users' Network
 This is a unique user-led and user-controlled organisation with a staff of over 25 whose aim is to reach out to users of health, social and other services to bring about real change, enhancing their quality of life.

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Full details and application pack available after 6 September 1999 from the Chair at Wiltshire & Swindon Users' Network, 7 Prince Maurice Court, Hambleton Avenue, Devizes, Wilts SN10 2RT.

Chief Executive's Department

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For further information please contact Cliff Stephens on 0181 545 3379.

Further details and an application form are available from Chief Executive's Personnel Section, London Borough of Merton, Crown House, Civic Centre, London Road, Morden, Surrey SM4 5DX. Tel: 0181 545 4033 (24 hour answerphone) or fax 0181 545 3913. Please quote reference CS/DN.

These details are also available in large print and on tape.

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To find out how to register on our new candidate database, you can visit our website at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/jobs/bbctalent> (online applications are particularly welcome.) Alternatively, email us at onlinetalent@bbc.co.uk, write to BBC Talent, PO Box 10670, London W12 8GN or telephone 0181 740 0005. Text phone: 0181 225 9878. Please quote appropriate ref. and give full name and address.

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BBC EXTEND is offering a total of 30 paid placements in various departments - 20 will be provided by BBC Broadcast and 10 will come from BBC Production. The programme aims to provide successful applicants with valuable experience that will help them to secure meaningful future employment within broadcasting. A range of jobs is being identified covering positions such as, Researchers, Broadcast Assistants, Trainee Asst Producers and Librarians.

The BBC EXTEND scheme is part of the BBC's commitment to reflect the diversity of the UK in its workforces and its programmes and is managed by the BBC Broadcast Equality Unit. Ref. 41559/DI

Please contact Andrew Jeffrey, Co-ordinator, at BBC North, Barrack Road, Newcastle NE99 2NE Tel: 0191 232 1313 fax: 0191 222 0182 Text phone 0191 232 2172 or email andrew.jeffrey@bbc.co.uk, for more information about how to get involved.

BBC

Working for equality of opportunity

Disability Now website

If you advertise jobs, courses, conferences and seminars, you should be making the most of our website. It carries sample news and features from the current issue, over 270 links to other useful sites, a guestbook for leaving comments about any disability issue, and an archive of all our news and features articles from January '97 to April '99. Our jobs page (within the adverts section) is expanding rapidly because advertisers know they can reach their target audience.

If you want to know how our browsers feel, here are some of their comments, either left on our guestbook or e-mailed to us.

- I find the adverts featured in DN invaluable in contacting disabled friendly business/services - E-mailed feedback form from DN's website (name withheld)
- I would like to congratulate you on your website accidentally found via the Royal Association in Aid of Deaf People's website links. Well done on an informative website - Dawn Marshall, Newcastle on Tyne
- I think it is a superb publication and have never found so much information in such a small, compact and interesting publication - E-mailed feedback form from DN's website (name withheld)
- Good! Very useful site. It's the only one in which I've found some information on a particular topic (adaptations on passenger airlines for disabled people) - Giovanni Saccavino, Italy
- I have been reading DN for several months now and find it very informative. There are many things that I have often wondered about and now I can find out. The website is great - easy to navigate and really interesting - Rach, Staffordshire
- Disability Now is one of the best disability publications I have ever read, it gives you news on every subject you could think of. Thank you. - E-mailed feedback form from DN's website (name withheld)

<http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk>

e-mail: editor@disabilitynow.org.uk

DN's website advert

All the recruitment, conference, seminar and course adverts in Disability Now get put on to the DN website for free.

However, if you have missed the print deadline, you can still go on the website for a small fee. The advert will normally appear on-line on the same day.

So, if you want to take advantage of DN's on-line adverts page, call Richard Gresham, Advertising Manager, tel: 0171-619 7336 fax: 0171-619 7331 minicom: 0171-619 7332

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We Design And Build Any
Cot or Bed You Need.

New Products Extra Strong Playpens.
Extra Large Stairgates.
Fitted Padded Play Areas.
High Quality Fair prices
Information Phone 01993 842885

Continued on page 33

• Recruitment

ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR DISABLED PEOPLE IN EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

The Secretary of State for Education and Employment invites applications for the post of Committee Member to represent the interests of disabled people. The position is unpaid.

ACDET is an Advisory Body sponsored by the Department for Education and Employment. Members are disabled people, employers, and representatives of trade unions and disability organisations. It advises Ministers and officials on:

- securing equality of participation in employment, self employment and training opportunities for disabled people, in particular those with significant impairments;
- recruitment, promotion and retention of disabled employees and support services covering their employment, self employment, careers advice and training;
- research on programmes and services;
- the effectiveness of DfEE funded labour market interventions for helping disabled people.

The COMMITTEE MEMBER will:

provide a disabled person's perspective on the work of the Committee.

APPLICANTS should have:

- personal experience of disability or a voluntary/disability organisation background;
- credibility with organisations of and for disabled people;
- proven knowledge, interest and commitment to promoting effective employment and training opportunities for disabled people;
- ability and willingness to undertake public engagements;
- good interpersonal and communication skills.

Committee Member posts are unpaid but relevant expenses will be paid. The successful candidate will be appointed for 3 years and attend 4 - 5 meetings a year. They may be expected to attend additional meetings and events in any year.

For further information and application details, please send a postcard bearing your name/address and reference "ACDET" to:
Jon Lynch, DfEE, Level 5, Caxton House, 6-12 Tothill Street, London SW1H 9NA or to email address: pba.team@dfee.gov.uk

The information pack is available in hard copy, Braille or disc. Please state your preference when applying.

The closing date is: 25 August 1999

THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IS COMMITTED TO MAKING APPOINTMENTS ON MERIT BY
FAIR AND OPEN PROCESSES, TAKING ACCOUNT OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Department for
Education and Employment

• Courses



Qualify in Disability and Employment

City University gives you opportunities to study aspects of disability and employment at different levels:

Distance Learning Certificate

The open learning Certificate in Disability Management at Work is available to everyone interested in improving work opportunities for disabled people, and can lead to a Diploma/MSc.

Complete in six months, starting in January, June or September.

Taught Courses

The MSc/Diploma in Disability Management in Work and Rehabilitation can be studied at the University on one or two days a week by those with a relevant qualification or work experience. Complete in one or two years, starting in October.

A few partial bursaries and scholarships are available for the MSc or Diploma. Disabled people are particularly welcome to apply.

This Programme is sponsored by The Post Office and the Ian Karten Trust

Find out more by contacting Brenda, Jonathan or Duncan at: Rehabilitation Resource Centre, City University, Northampton Square, London EC1V 0HB. Tel: 0171 477 8378. Fax: 0171 477 8356. E-mail: RRC@city.ac.uk

THE UNIVERSITY FOR BUSINESS AND THE PROFESSIONS



DLF provides a wide range of training
courses including:

Disability Discrimination Act part III
- disabled people's rights of access to
goods and services.

The Law & Practice of
Equipment Provision.

Accident Prevention Awareness
- home safety for the elderly.

For further information please
contact DLF training on

0171-289 6111

Minicom: 0171-432 8009

Fax: 0171-266 2922

E-mail: dlfinfo@dlf.org.uk

TO ADVERTISE

your vacancies,
seminars, conferences
or courses contact
Richard Gresham or
Patrick Durham-
Matthews at Disability
Now, 6 Market Road,
London N7 9PW, or
tel: 0171-619 7336,
tel: 0171-619 7320,
fax: 0171-619 7331,
minicom: 0171-619 7332.

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NEIGHBOURHOOD ADVICE AND BENEFITS

TEMPORARY BENEFIT CLERICAL OFFICERS (12 MONTH CONTRACTS)

BENEFIT SERVICE

£11,106 - £12,663

Various City Wide Locations

You will provide broad clerical support within a team of staff dealing with benefit claims for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and Free School Meals.

Duties include dealing with incoming/outgoing post, filing, looking at/updating computer based records, obtaining information by letter and answering telephone enquiries from members of the public.

You must have experience of general office work and have good verbal/written communication and interpersonal skills.

Further details and application form from Central Personnel and Training Section,
Room 229, The Council House, Birmingham B3 3AB. Tel: 0121 303 2072
(24 hour answering service) Minicom Line: 0121 303 3827 (Minicom users only).

Quote Ref No: BCO/230.

Closing date: 13 August 1999.



Birmingham City Council

We welcome applications from all sections of the community, irrespective of race, colour, gender, sexuality or disability. Job sharers welcome, no partner necessary.



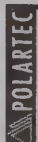
• For sale

Powerchairs Mobility Consultants

New and Nearly New, Electric Wheelchairs,
3 and 4 Wheel Scooters.
All models wanted and for sale.

Ring Free anytime
0500 357 496

All major credit cards accepted



Polartec fleece and ankle socks.

Details from Island Glen.
Tel: (01253) 838880.

PRE-OWNED & DEMONSTRATOR WAV'S FOR SALE

Mercedes Vito 2.3, diesel, 1998 R, turquoise, 17k miles. Wheelchair pass' sits alongside driver. Lowered rear floor access, Portaramp, 2 M1 tested. Tip up forward facing rear seats. Many extras £16,950

Chairman Escort 1.3, petrol, 1993 L, fsh, red. Lowering suspension and lowered floor £6,995

Renault Extra 1.9, diesel, 1997 R, white, 20k miles. Lowered floor, lightweight vision style ramp, new conversion £8,695

Renault Extra 1.6, diesel, 1993 L, 35k miles, white. Economical WAV £4,995

Skoda Cube 1.3, petrol, 1997 R, only 2k miles, white. Lowered floor, lightweight vision style ramp, new conversion. Big saving on new price at £10,995

Citroen Berlingo 1.9, diesel, 1997 P, pas, white. Lowered floor, lightweight vision style ramp, new conversion £11,895

Peugeot Partner 1.4, petrol, 1997 P, 24k miles, metallic silver. Central locking, electric front windows, lowered floor, lightweight vision style ramp, new conversion £12,595

VW Caravelle SWB 2.5, petrol injection, automatic, 1997 P. Not converted yet so can be built to your specification. Possibilities: ramp or lift, 6-way seat, and hand controls, etc. Versatile WAV £POA

Ford Galaxy Aspen 1.9 TDi, 1997 P, red, 4 passengers, driver & wheelchair. Lowered rear access, lightweight vision style ramp, new conversion £15,795

All the above vehicles come with our Comprehensive Used Vehicle Warranty



95 Bonnygate, Cupar, Fife KY15 4LG
Tel: (01334) 657722, fax: (01334) 657711

• Recruitment

Redbridge Disability Association (ReDA)

Payroll and Administration Worker
Scale 6 SCP 28
£10,391 for 21 hours per week

We wish to appoint an enthusiastic and well organised person as Payroll and Administration Worker for the Independent Living Scheme, which provides support for disabled people who employ their own personal assistants. This post is an exciting opportunity to establish a payroll service for users.

You will provide administrative support to the Scheme and maintain the payroll service. You must be computer literate, and have knowledge of databases, spreadsheets and good word processing skills. You must have a thorough understanding of office routines and be able to work to a deadline.

This is a 3 year contract.

For an application pack contact:
Redbridge Disability Association
98-100 Ilford Lane
Ilford, Essex
IG1 2LD
Tel: 0181 514 2565
Fax: 0181 514 2515
Minicom: 0181 514 5686

Closing date: Friday 27 August 1999.

Funded by the National Lottery Charities Board.



LEEDS
CITY COUNCIL

SOCIAL SERVICES

Leeds Centre for Integrated Living, Amley Grange Drive, Leeds LS12 3GQ.
MANAGER (Ref: RDC 952).
SCP 34 £21,549, 37 hours.

Leeds Centre for Integrated Living (LCIL) is a new initiative established jointly between Leeds Social Services and an Executive Committee of disabled people. There is commitment towards the centre having independent status by 2001. LCIL enables disabled people to challenge and break the barriers that prevent them from participating in everyday life. The centre provides services developed by disabled people, for disabled people. It assists disabled people in Leeds to take control of their own lives, to live where they want, how they want and with whom they choose.

We want to employ a disabled person with the skills, commitment and vision to:

- be responsible for the strategic management of the centre.
- work in conjunction with the Management Committee to ensure the implementation of ethos into practice.
- manage budgets and work towards securing funding.
- take responsibility for supervision, support and training of staff.
- promote principles of empowerment, choice and social model of disability.

In accordance with LCIL Policy and Service Delivery Needs, it is an essential requirement that the person appointed is disabled.

The Department is committed to training and developing its staff.

Applications welcome from all, irrespective of gender, race, marital status, age or whether lesbian or gay.

We are able to offer you supervision, induction, a staff development scheme and a relocation package.

For further information contact Leeds Centre for Integrated Living on Leeds (0113) 214 3599.

For application forms and job outlines please ring our answerphone service (24 hours) on Leeds (0113) 247 7965, minicom (0113) 247 8769 or apply in writing enclosing a large self addressed envelope to Director of Social Services, Selectapost 9, 110 Merrion Centre, Leeds LS2 8QB.

CLOSING DATE: 26 AUGUST 1999.

"WORKING TOWARDS EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY"

The City Council has a no smoking policy.

FULL-TIME POST(S) SUITABLE FOR JOB SHARING

Disability, Pregnancy & Parenthood National Information Service

Part-time **Information Officer**, 17.5 hours per week
required for Nov 99. Salary £19,194 pro rata + ILW

What the work entails

In-depth individually tailored response given to disabled parents, professional workers, planners and other organisations. Researching information sources, collating and updating. Desktop publishing of DPPI journal and production of information sheets.

Who is invited to apply?

Disabled parents or others with experience and sensitive awareness of the issues facing disabled parents, and possessing:

- IT competence including desktop publishing (currently PageMaker)
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Enthusiasm and commitment
- Ability to be self-starting and to work well with other staff and volunteers.

For application packs (standard, large print, tape) send a large SAE (39p) to office administrator at: DPPI, 5th Floor, 45 Beech Street, London EC2P 2LX.

Closing date for application 16 August 1999.



BATH (Bromley Association of
People with Disabilities)

Association Development Officer
circa £15,000, 41 hrs inc. lunch hour

BATH is a well established association of disabled people. With over 70 groups belonging to our Association we are seeking to employ someone who can develop and further our links with our members.

The successful applicant will have knowledge and understanding of the social model of disability and the voluntary, statutory and health sectors. They must have IT and information gathering experience.

If you feel you have the enthusiasm and commitment to meet this challenging role BATH would like to hear from you.

We offer a supportive team environment working from accessible premises.

Closing date for receipt of completed applications; 20 August 1999.
Interviews will be held during the first week of September 1999.

BATH is an equal opportunities employer. Further details and application pack, in print, large print, Braille or on tape, are available by contacting: BATH, Lewis House, 30 Beckenham Road, Beckenham, Kent BR3 4LS, tel:0208-663 3345 (voice and minicom), fax: 0208-663 1442, e-mail: bath.bromley@virgin.net

BATH is positive about people with disabilities



SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT

DISABILITY ARTS CO-ORDINATOR

£19,194 - £20,946

(+7.5% irregular hours allowance)

Ref: SW/CC/93/99

Based at Charleston Centre, Paisley this is a temporary post for 9 months, funded by the Scottish Arts Council New Directions Lottery Fund. You will create and implement a vibrant Disability Arts programme, which will encourage increased participation in the arts by disabled people living in Renfrewshire.

You must have an in-depth understanding of, and commitment to, disability arts and politics, and have experience of programming and managing a successful arts programme. This is a new post and you will primarily be responsible for devising and implementing a dynamic, varied and balanced programme of performances and participatory activities by and for disabled people in Renfrewshire and towards the establishment of a Disability Arts Forum.

Application pack/further information available from Social Work Department, Personnel Section, North Building, Cotton Street, Paisley PA1 1TZ. Tel: 0141 842 5106/5112.

Closing date: 23 August 1999.



Clothing Forum Development Officer £17,500pa

Highly motivated? Able to liaise confidently at all levels? Experience of disability equality issues essential. Marketing/ sales development would be an asset.

Working with the Chief Executive and a small team based in Nottingham, and Bradford, you will be responsible for developing the existing Clothing Forum (a group of people representing fashion retailers and disabled customers) to gather views throughout the UK, particularly Wales and England. You will also be promoting our income generating services within the fashion industry.

awear, a national organisation of disabled people and fashion professionals seeks to ensure disabled people have access to fashionable clothes of their choice. We have exciting plans. Join us in making them happen.

Could be home based with regular travel and office contact. This post is open to job share. Phone for an application pack on 0115-953 0439.

awear particularly welcomes applications from disabled people.

awear



Deadlines for the September issue of DN:

Booking deadline is 13 August

Copy deadline is 17 August

• Holidays

ORLANDO, FLORIDA

HOME WITH A HEART FOR DISABLED TRAVELLERS!

SPACIOUS, LUXURY, ADAPTED BUNGALOW
SITUATED ON GOLF COURSE.
3 DOUBLE BEDROOMS, 2 BATHROOMS
(MANGAR BATHLIFT INSTALLED),
CABLE TV, FREE LOCAL TELEPHONE CALLS,
FREE COUNTRY CLUB MEMBERSHIP.
24 HR 'ON CALL' MANAGEMENT COMPANY.
15 mins ORLANDO AIRPORT. 20 mins DISNEY.
PARAPLEGIC OWNER.

**SUE FISHER, 5 PARK LANE,
BROUGHTON PARK, SALFORD M7 4HT.
TEL/FAX: 0161 792 3029**

BOOK NOW TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT

ASHWELLTHORPE HALL HOTEL NEAR NORWICH, NORFOLK

Beautiful Elizabethan manor house in 11 acres
of natural grounds. Wheelchair accessible
throughout. Electric hoists etc. Minibus.
Aug/Sept special from only £195 pw
Call 01508 489324

LLETY MIERI

LLANDEILO, WEST WALES

3 charming award-winning cottages, designed for
wheelchair users and their families. Peaceful rural
location overlooked by Dinewr Castle. Each warm
and well equipped cottage sleeps 4. Extensive grounds
and games room. Open all year. Short breaks
available. Tel: Catherine McLoughlin (01558 823 059)
for brochure.

PENROSE BURDEN NORTH CORNWALL "Holiday Care Award Winners"

Holiday Cottages designed for wheelchair users
and their families. Rural setting with superb
views. Dogs welcome. Wood burning stoves
and daily meal service.

Please ring or write for colour brochure.

**R&N Hall, Penrose Burden,
St Breward, Bodmin, Cornwall
PL30 4LZ. Telephone Bodmin
(01208) 850277 or 850617**



Self Catering villas and
cottages, hotels, B&B, car
hire with hand controls,
adapted vans, etc. Scuba
Diving courses and other
sporting and leisure facilities.

David Player, Wheeling Around The Algarve
Tel: 00 351 89 393636 Fax: 00 351 89 397448
E-mail: dave@player.pt Website: http://www.player.pt

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Purpose built holiday centre. Epping Forest,
Cambridge. Southend nearby. 26 single en-suite
rooms, 5 twin rooms. CTY. Motorized hoists.
Bar. Conservatory. Coffee lounge.
Visits/entertainment included. Help buttons.
Nurses/volunteer support. Social Services
registered. From £255 pw. For brochure call:
0171 833 4579 ext. 132

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MELROSE, SCOTTISH BORDERS HOLIDAY CARE SERVICE UK WINNER

Five category 1 self-catering holiday
cottages in magnificent setting
overlooking Tweed valley.
Two cottages have overhead hoists
Scottish Tourist Board 4 stars.
For colour brochure please contact:

**JILL HART, DINGLETON MAINS,
MELROSE TD6 9HS
TEL/FAX 01896 823258**

http://www.aboutscotland.co.uk/eildon/cottages.html

GALWAY BAY - REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Brandy Harbour cottage apartments. 2 luxury 2-bed
apartments. One wheelchair accessible, on sea
front in scenic area. 20 mins from city of Galway.
Ideal for touring the West of Ireland.
Irish Tourist Board 3 Star.

Tel: 00 35391 796491

ODDICOMBE HALL HOTEL

Provides an excellent holiday for the disabled
person and their family. We have full disabled
facilities and are able to cater for organised
parties. All wheelchair accessible rooms open on
to a private garden with conservatory and have
breathtaking sea views. Private car park with
unloading at entrance to the hotel. Open all year.
Why not escape and relax at delightful
Babbacombe, Torquay? Category 2.
Special 3-4 day breaks Nov-April. Discount for
group bookings. Tel: (01803) 313457.

Brittany Cottage to let. Fully
adapted for wheelchair use. Good
access to beaches. Sleeps up to 6.
Details **C. Hodgson.**
Tel (01924) 454300.

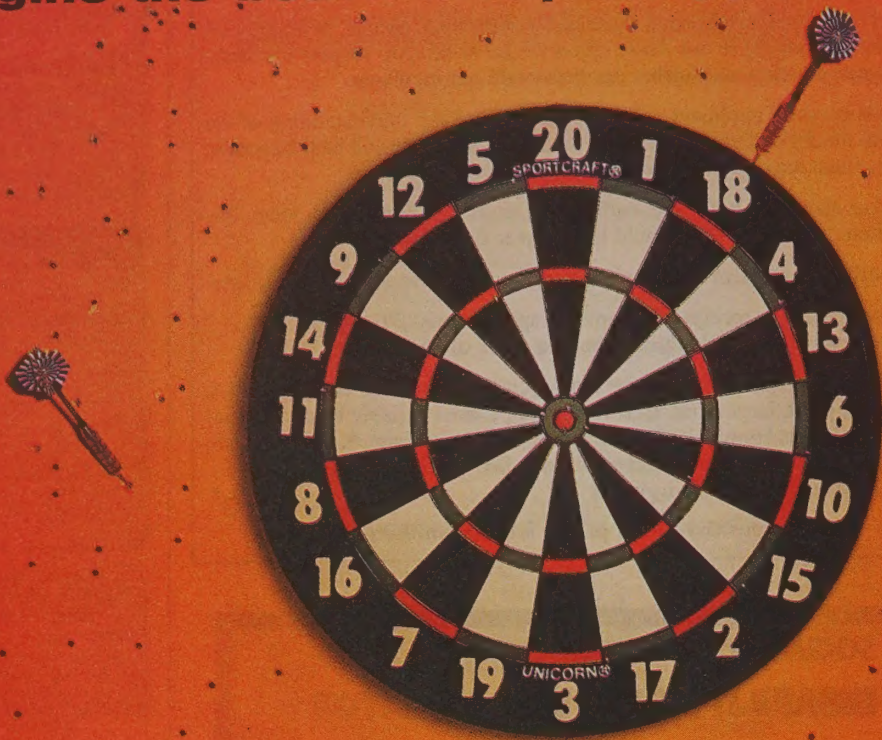


5 Star self catering cottages on animal park in
North Wales. Fully wheelchair accessible with
all services for disabled people, 2 miles from
the beach. Three quarters hour drive from
Snowdonia National Park. 01407 711433.

Continued on page 34

• Recruitment

Imagine the board is equal opportunities issues.



The darts are people's attempts to manage them.

and the holes are the ones in their thinking.

Here's our fresh approach.

At Northamptonshire we are launching one of the most progressive Equalities initiatives in the Country. We are challenging conventional approaches, improving community consultation, promoting cultural and social awareness, and working in collective partnership with other stakeholders to explore alternative and joined-up ways of dealing with equality and social justice issues.

Head of Equalities Up to £38k plus package

You will provide strategic leadership in developing and implementing Equality issues by:

- Effectively managing the Equality Team.
- Grasping the Local Government Agenda.
- Working closely with Elected Members, Senior Managers and external organisations in developing and enhancing Equality Policies.
- Influencing, monitoring and reviewing Equality Policies and Action Plan.
- Outstanding management skills and the ability to influence opinion at all levels

With a solid background in the development and implementation of Equalities Policies and Strategies, you will need excellent communication skills and the ability to work effectively across departmental and organisational boundaries.



**Northamptonshire
County Council**

For further details and an application form please telephone Manjit Sohal on 01604 237315 or write to Resources Personnel, PO Box 93, County Hall, Northampton, NN1 1AN. e-mail: msohal@northamptonshire.gov.uk
Closing date is 6th August, 1999.

Equalities Officers (3 Posts) Up to £26k plus package

You will ensure the effective development and implementation of Equality Policies by:

- Specialising in race, gender or disability.
- Demonstrating generalist experience in the range of diversity issues such as sexuality.
- Effective communication in liaising with Directorates and community forums.
- Experience policy, research or project work.
- The empathy will be on policy, project and team work.

Working Towards Equality

An exciting opportunity for helping to develop a small business in Hertfordshire exists for a well motivated and enthusiastic person. You will be helping a young disabled man to run his business he has started in the field of disability. You will need to provide personal care but training will be given.

The salary is in the range of £13,500.

So if you are wanting:

- to develop your office skills
- to help develop a business
- to travel around the country
- to develop your awareness of disability.

Please phone for an application form and job description

01438 813658

Expanding international company looking for people to work from home – full-time/part-time. Good earning potential.

Call 01255 479345

Disability Now is not responsible for claims made in the advertisements it prints and all readers are advised to check claims with the advertisers before relying on them.

• Holidays

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE HOLIDAY COTTAGE IN RURAL FRANCE

Charming cottage in Dordogne region available for rent. Reasonable rates. If you are looking for peace and quiet, warm weather, good food and wine, this is the place for you.

Book now for 1999.

For more information tel: 0181 885 4971 evenings.

SHOREFIELD COUNTRY PARK Downton, Hampshire:

Award winning coastal site with indoor/outdoor pools; sports/leisure facilities; restaurants and bars. Wheelchair accessible, fully equipped 1/2 bedroom chalets, sleep 4-6.

Call: K. Pepper on 01590 642866

New Forest Mencap Charity No. 1038962.

Blagdon Farm Country Holidays Devon/Cornwall border

Superb, south-facing, wheelchair accessible luxury bungalows overlooking lake and set within 38 acres of glorious countryside. Many on-site facilities including indoor heated pool. Take-away meals delivered and equipment loan available. Tourist Board Highly Commended.

For colour brochure please contact:
Pauline and Tony Blight, Blagdon Farm,
Ashwater, Beaworthy, Devon EX21 5DF.
Phone: 01409 211509. Fax 01409 211510.

HOLIDAY COTTAGE SOUTH WEST WALES

Swn y Gwynt (Sound of the Wind).
5 dragon WTB rating.
Grade 1 access rating

Built specifically for people with disabilities. Suit up to 4 people, including two in wheelchairs. Great views; good touring centre; easy parking. Reasonable inclusive rates. As good a place as you'll find anywhere.

Telephone Grew on 01267 237261

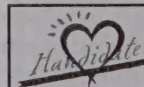
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Cheshire CW9 5HL
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Overseas +44 + 1606 49093



For disabled
people – able
bodied welcome

Tel: 01473 226950
Fax: 01473 254030

New era, new logo, 50 weddings on.
To find out more about Handidate
write, phone, fax or e-mail:

Freeport, Handidate, The Wellington Centre,
52 Chevallier Street, Ipswich IP1 2BR
E-mail: handidate@btinternet.com
A member of ABIA

Action and Rights of Disabled People in Newham

are seeking to appoint a disabled person as an

Administrative Worker

25 hours per week, scale 5.22, salary £10,846 inc LW.

This post is funded by the National Lottery Charities Board until March 2000. Action and Rights are striving to be an equal opportunities employer.

Closing date: Friday 20 August 1999.

Please request an application form, enclosing a large self-addressed envelope, from:

Ali Safder

Action and Rights of Disabled People in Newham
c/o Community Links
105 Barking Road
Canning Town
London E16 4HQ



ARTSLINE, London's information and advice service for all disabled people on arts and entertainment wishes to appoint a:



LONDON'S INFORMATION & ADVICE SERVICE FOR
DISABLED PEOPLE ON ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

DEVELOPMENT /D.E.T. OFFICER

to be responsible for the development of ARTSLINE's projects, to be responsible for Artline's Disability Equality Training Service and to co-ordinate our team of freelance trainers.

5 days per week

Salary: £17,200 per annum.

To obtain an application form and further details of this post, please send an A4 SAE to:

Roger Robinson – Director, ARTSLINE, 54 Charlton Street, London NW1 1HS, tel: 0171-388 2460.

Deadline for applications: Wednesday 11 August 1999.

ARTSLINE is an equal opportunities employer.

ARTSLINE is funded by Camden Council, London Borough Grants, London Arts Board and local authorities.

Comfort is on the agenda for *DN's* special offers this month – we have something for your posture and your feet. Read on for the chance to win some wonderful prizes

Are you sitting comfortably?

Thanks to Scandinavian Mobility we have an RoHo AirLite cushion, worth £105, to give away. Perfect for people who have to sit for prolonged periods of time, the cushion comes in various sizes for wheelchairs, car seats or household/office chairs. The AirLite cushion has several special features: a

contoured foam body for extra support to the thighs and more room for the pelvis, ensuring a better posture; an air insert pad at the rear to help spread weight and relieve pressure; a neoprene rubber base to prevent it from slipping; and a fluid resistant fabric that makes it easy to clean. If you aren't the lucky

winner, you can still order the AirLite cushions, tel: (01536) 267660, fax: (01536) 402507. To enter, send a postcard, marked AirLite, to *DN* at the address on page 2. Supply your name and address, and having measured the inside



dimensions of your chair, write down the nearest size from the following list: 16x16in, 18x16in, 18x18in, 20x18in.

Freedom and Mobility with an ELAP rotating car seat

Now there's no need to dread that car journey. Let ELAP transform your life by providing the freedom and mobility our rotating car seat promises.

- Simply replaces your original car seat
- Specifically designed for 2 or 4 door vehicles
- Easy to install
- Original seat may be refitted when required



MAKES ENTERING AND LEAVING YOUR CAR EASY!

ELAP
ENGINEERING LIMITED Dept DN THE ROTATING CAR SEAT PEOPLE
Fort Street, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 1QG
Fax: 01254 389992 E-mail: mail@elap.co.uk Web: www.elap.co.uk

TEL: 01254 871599 FOR MORE INFORMATION & FREE VIDEO

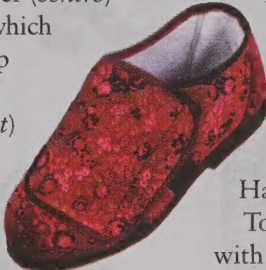
Treat your feet to a fitted feel

If you're not resting your feet you'll be using them, so here are some great shoes that will keep you comfortable all day long.

Thanks to Softerfit, *DN* has three pairs of wide-fitting soft footwear to give away to three lucky readers. These shoes are ideal for people with swollen or painful feet and are highly adjustable to make them easier to put on and take off. Softerfit produce a whole range of shoes in different styles, available in various



materials and patterns. Readers are able to choose from the following three styles, which all start at 3E width fitting: Litchfield Brown Leather (left) worth £33-£35 depending on size; Oxford Regal Print slipper (centre) worth £22-£23 which has an extra deep fitting; or Derby Beige Vinyl (right) worth £21-£22. The Litchfield has a stitched bellows tongue for more adjustment and is suitable for indoor and outdoor use. The Oxford is extra wide



and deep – ideal for swollen or bandaged feet. The Derby is also for indoor/outdoor use, and comes with a velcro fastening – so no more fiddly laces! If you don't win you can still order a catalogue from Softerfit Ltd, 2-4 Cross Green Lane, Halton, Leeds LS15 7QX. To enter, send a postcard with your name, address and standard shoe size, to *Disability Now* at the address on page 2.

Terms and conditions

- Closing date is 27/9/99 • Entrants must be over 18 • No proof of purchase required • UK entrants only
- No cash alternatives • Winners notified by post • *DN* reserves the right to use winners for future publicity • Editor's decision is final • Special offers not open to *DN* staff or associates

DisabilityNOW

Subscription form

To subscribe, fill in this form and return it with a cheque (payable to *Disability Now*) to: *Disability Now*, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW, or alternatively phone our subscriptions hotline, on 0171-619 7317.

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- One year (12 issues) only

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£31 (24 issues) ☐

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Those on means-tested benefits FREE income support, housing benefit, council tax exemption, disability working allowance, job seekers allowance (please include proof of entitlement – the name of the claimer, proof of the claimer and the benefit type) ☐

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ACTION MAN

Britain's first disabled stuntman *p5&10*

Pride of place: Making their voices heard at the Mardi Gras gay parade in London were members of Regard, the National Organisation of Disabled Lesbians and Gay Men



MICHAEL MELIA

<http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk>

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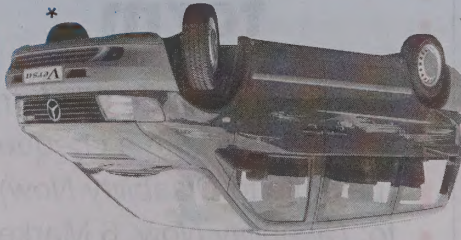
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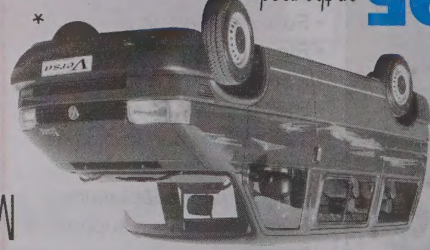


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